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A Reformed Weekly

SEPTEMBER 6, 1991/47th year of publication/No. 2272

Immigrants to Europe are both bane and blessing

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont. — You travel to Sweden or the Netherlands and expect that all the locals will be white-skinned and have family roots there which go back for centuries.

Not so today. There are new faces in Europe and two-thirds of them are black and Muslim.

Immigration and refugees are a worldwide problem. In a recent world media project, 20 newspapers around the world studied the problem in Western Europe's Economic Community. *The Christian Science Monitor* reported on the study in an eight-page feature. What the study found may help Canadians understand their own immigration and refugee problem by comparing it with Europe's situation.

Only two to three per cent of Europe's residents are recent immigrants, including illegal immigrants. There are eight million legal immigrants in the European Community, and an estimated half that many more who are illegal. Some 400,000 immigrants are legally accepted into Western Europe each year. But the immigrant profile is changing. Increasingly, immigrants are members of visible minorities and have religions and lifestyles very different from white Europeans.

White Europeans feel threatened by all these strangers pouring in, asserting themselves. Traditional Europeans feel their identity is at risk. The newcomers are taking jobs and demanding services. If Europeans are deeply entrenched in a quiet provincialism, they may want to kick the newcomers out.

Africans and Eastern Europeans are coming

Europeans are concerned about newcomers from two areas: Africa and Eastern Europe. Northern Africa is very close to Europe — only eight miles away at Gibraltar. People leave Africa out of sheer desperation: jobs are scarce, food is scarce in many places, and tyrants in some countries are trying to wipe out sectors of their own people. Of course most of Africa was colonized by Europe for many years, so there is a tie between the countries.

Perhaps a greater fear arises from the expectations of the hordes of refugees coming from Eastern Europe. Before the recent coup, the Soviet Union planned to permit its people to immigrate freely by 1993. Jobless Soviets and former Eastern bloc residents may move west, it is thought.

Some countries will need foreign workers for years to come. In Italy, for instance, women have, on average, only 1.7 children, well below the 2.1 needed for "replacement." Belgium and Austria also face population declines. Germany has a history of importing Turkish workers for limited-term contracts.

But in other countries like Spain, unemployment is high. And though Austria has little official unemployment, only 39 per cent of its men aged 55 to 65 are employed, compared with the Western average of about 59 per cent. Austrian labour economist Gudrun Biffl says that Austria also ranks among the lowest in female workers. New immigrants often get jobs which would have been filled by women and older people.

The difficulties of sorting out refugee issues are illustrated in Caritas, a large dormitory in Vienna run by the Catholic Church, where prospective immigrants live while their cases are being considered. Almost none are accepted as refugees because Austria, like most European countries, requires proof of personal danger from persecution back home. But various ethnic Hungarians staying at Caritas say a normal life is not possible back home in Romania.

Two models for accepting immigrants

"In Europe there have been two opposite models for immigration," says Manfred Matzka, Austria's director of Immigrantion and asylum issues. In the Swedish model everything was planned and the government said up front it would spend money to make immigration work. In the Italian model everyone was allowed to come in but nothing was done for the immigrants.

See **IMMIGRANTS**--p. 3.

Thinkbit:

Cartoons, a humorous form of signs, often point to a deeper truth. When we interpret them literally we destroy or distort that truth. Literalism does what it always does — misses the point.

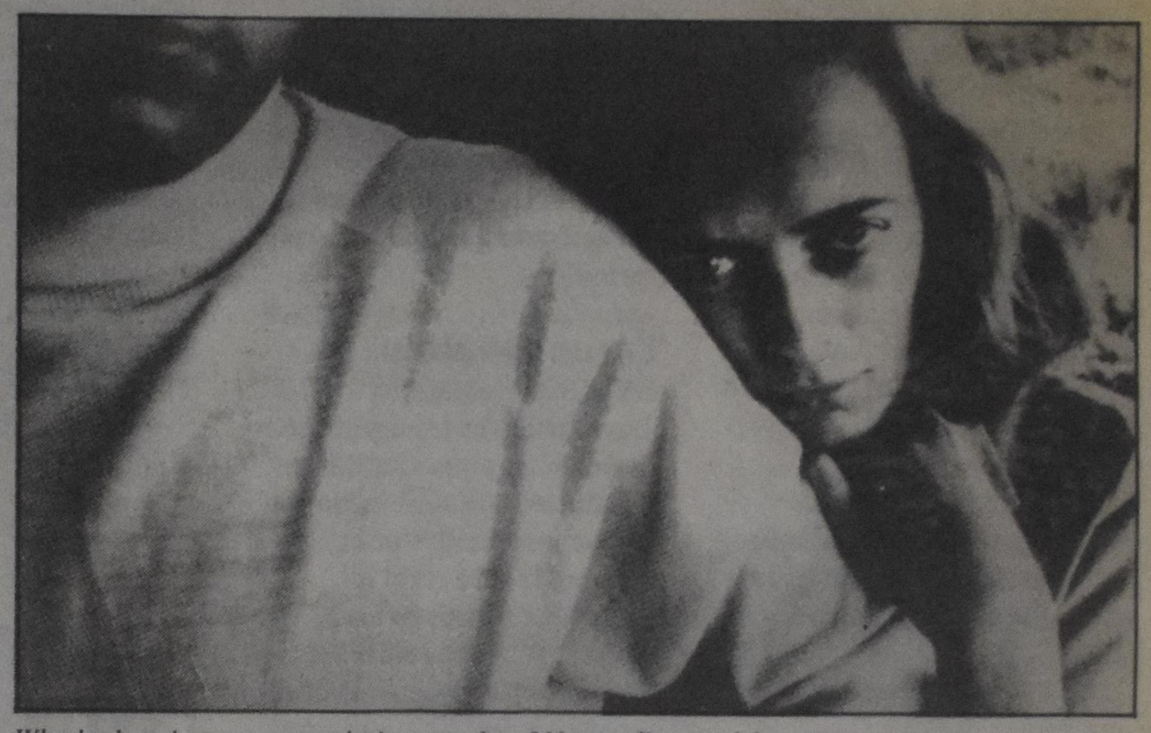
John Congram, *Presbyterian Record*

In this issue:

"Sjanie's Dolls" describes a unique way of "recycling" corn husks, and shows the recycler herself to be unique as well . . . . . p. 8

Throughout human history the Holy Spirit has worked in many and marvellous ways which often defy logic. Do we really believe the Spirit is that active today? . . . . . p. 9

Abused women exhibit hostage behaviour, studies reveal



Why do abused women stay and take more abuse? New studies reveal the answer.

Marian Van Til

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — The baffling problem of why abused women often stay with their abusive partners is undergoing a "radical new appraisal" by mental health experts, reports the *Toronto Star*. The appraisal, which may startle many outside the mental health field, was revealed at the recent annual meeting in San Francisco of the American Psychological Association (APA). The experts say that battered women are exhibiting characteristics not uncommon in classic hostage situations.

Studies presented at the APA meeting reveal that battered women exhibit the psychology of hostages. Their reaction to being abused bears a striking resemblance to the behaviour of eight other "hostage" groups: concentration camp prisoners, cult members, prisoners of war, civilians in Chinese communist prisons, procured prostitutes, incest victims, and emotionally and physically abused children.

Such behaviour is now called "Stockholm Syndrome." The name refers to a widely publicized Swedish bank hold-up in 1973. The robbers held two men and three women hostage for six days. During that time the hostages bonded with their captors and the captives actually came to see the police as trying to kill them rather than help them.

Unconscious survival tactic

Until recently, an abused woman's decision to stay with her abuser, her blaming herself for the abuse, or her denial that abuse was taking place had been interpreted as a sign of her hopelessness, a signal that she had given up. Now, however, psychiatrists and therapists are saying that such a reaction is more likely part of such a woman's struggle to survive.

"Stockholm Syndrome is very helpful in aiding us to understand why a woman stays in an abusive relationship," said University of Cleveland psychologist Dr. Edna Rawlings at the APA meeting.

"Mental health workers tend to get very frustrated that [an abused woman] won't leave the relationship," Rawlings says. But therapy methods used to help such women have changed, says Rawlings. "The goal of therapy now is to eliminate the hostage psychology."

Stockholm Syndrome is widely recognized in hostage situations, so much so that police departments dealing with hostage crises often encourage hostages to bond with their captors because it may greatly increase the hostages' survival chances — though it may also mean that released hostages later refuse to testify against their former captors.

'Kindness' to the victim

Rawlings says four conditions create the Stockholm Syndrome: someone threatens another person's survival and the victim sees the threat as very real; the abuser shows the victim some kindness; the victim is unable to escape; the victim is isolated from outsiders.

"The only person the victim can turn to is the abuser," explains Rawlings. "If the abuser shows any sign of kindness it gives the victim hope. Even stopping the abuse can be seen as an act of kindness. [A battered woman] takes this little streak of kindness and uses it as something that will help her survive."

The victim eventually tries to "get inside [the abuser's] head," Rawlings explained, to try to understand why he's punishing her, so she can avoid further abuse. But when she does that, "eventually she loses her own sense of self," Rawlings continued. "If release is won at this time she will have a difficult time leaving."

Rawlings identified Stockholm Syndrome in abused women and carefully studied the parallels between their behaviour and the eight other hostage groups. "Bonding to the abuser occurred in all nine hostage groups we examined," she reports.

Signs that bonding has occurred are such things as being grateful for any act of kindness shown her, denying the abuse, being "hypervigilent" about the abuser's needs, being suspicious of people trying to help her, finding it difficult to leave the abuser, and fearing that the abuser will come back to get her if she does leave.

Needless to say, such bonding can be extremely dangerous, but the women "deny the danger they're in," Rawling notes. "They see this person as their only friend. This is also a person who has given them life. This is the only identity they have now."

See **STOCKHOLM**--p. 2.

Stockholm Syndrome a kind of elegant defense mechanism

...continued from page 1.

Mirth Vos, a St. Catharines, Ont., Christian therapist who has worked with many abused women — many of whom, along with their abusers, are church members — recognizes the syndrome in many of her own clients. She feels that the allowing of one's self-identity to be absorbed by the abuser is the key problem.

"It's interesting that I just finished reading an account by James Cross of his being captured by the PLQ," says Vos. "He survived by consciously not allowing himself to make eye contact with his captors. He was aware that if he were to do that, they would [be able to] control him."

"It's so easy to see how the syndrome develops," continues Vos. "Any of us are capable of ending up like that when the people we depend on are abusive. We all need comforting. That encourages us to see connection to our abusers. I see the root of it in that created need to be comforted and to need contact with others."

Vos agrees when Rawlings says that Stockholm Syndrome makes it very difficult to counsel abused women and that it is very hard to break down the conditions that set up the syndrome. But explaining Stockholm syndrome to them can help. "It helps eliminate self-blame," she says.

Vos observes that Stockholm Syndrome is a defense mechanism. "It's kind of elegant in its own way," she muses, thinking of how amazingly the human mind was created — "except that it allows for continued abuse." She notes that group work (i.e., the women meeting in sessions with others who have had similar experiences) is very necessary and almost always beneficial. "They finally get courage from others when they see the real picture and they realize that they need not hate *themselves.*"

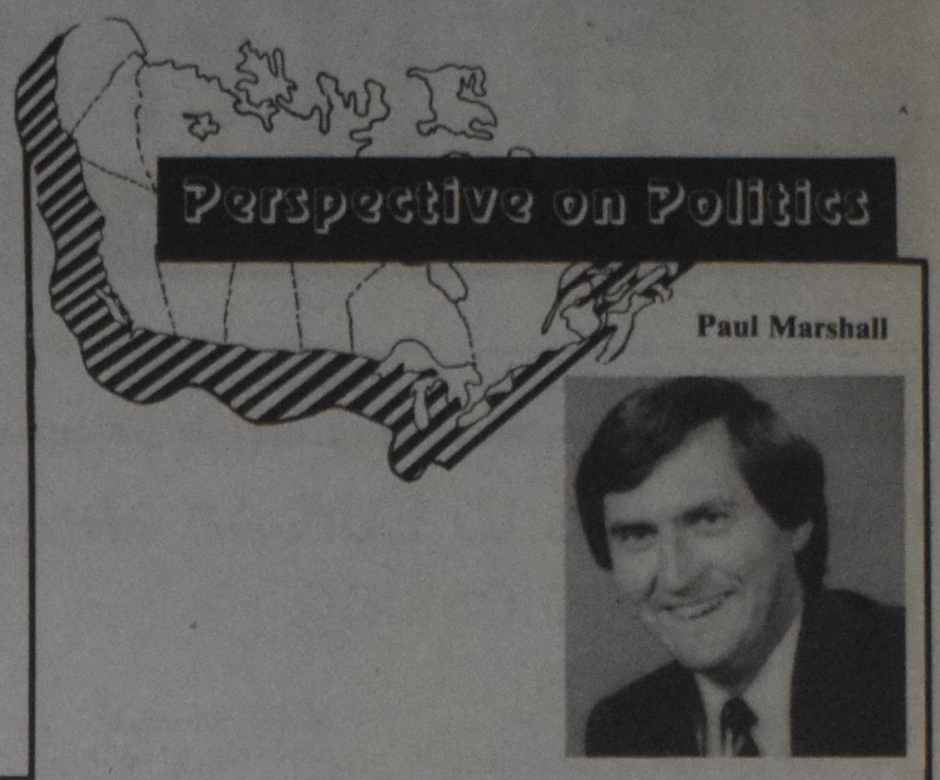
'I'm an awful kid'

Vos draws a parallel to abused children (many abused women were abused children). The abused woman's situation with her partner is "no different from a child's dependence on his or her parents. When the child sees a discrepancy between how the parents act and what they say should be done, the child doesn't say, 'Boy, I have lousy parents,' but he or she says, 'I must be an awful kid.' The needs of the child cause it to turn on itself."

While much has already been learned about the phenomenon of battered women bonding with their abusers, the outlook, according to many mental health professionals, is not bright. Among study results presented to the APA meeting was the terrible fact that fully 28 per cent of dating relationships contain some kind of physical, emotional or sexual abuse. One study revealed that 25 to 35 per cent of its female subjects perceived violence toward them as a sign of love.

Vos speaks to that statistic. She and her colleagues are concerned that little progress will be made until abused women, women in general, and especially men begin to realize that abuse of women is not first of all *sexual* behaviour but violent assault. "Society is so weighted in favour of the males that it has been necessary to drive the point home that sexual violence is assault, not sexuality."

"All of this has to be taken out of the area of sexuality. It is criminal violence," she asserts. The identifying of Stockholm Syndrome seems to support her point.



Paul Marshall

Why rights will not save Canada

Much of the blame (or praise) for the failure of the Meech Lake Accord was laid at the door of our politicians. And certainly, any process which failed so narrowly and in such confused circumstances betrays some lack of political judgment or competence.

But we need to look beyond these failings and ask the reason for the opposition the accord generated in English Canada. There was particular concern on the part of aboriginal peoples, and a general feeling that Quebec was getting too much.

Underlying these fears, especially amongst those with pretensions to intellectual status, was a concern over human rights. Many believed that the clause that described Quebec as a "distinct society" was a threat to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Could Quebec's distinctness be understood by the courts as something which would limit certain individual rights?

Charter not infallible

I did not (and do not) share these concerns. I certainly believe in human rights and do not want to see them undercut. But I do not believe that Canada's present Charter is the sum and substance of such rights such that it is beyond all change or limitation.

The outcry over "distinct society" went far beyond a laudable concern for rights. It often involved a gut-level, religious type of reaction to anything that might challenge the overwhelming priority given to individual choice in our society. Our new emphasis on individual rights, imported from the U.S., has added a crucial new point of conflict and tension in our already difficult co-existence.

But does any of this matter? Meech is dead and gone. However, any future constitutional negotiations will almost certainly raise the same set of questions. And a reluctance to let the realities of Quebec's communal sense have any sway with or effect on our often very abstract claims for rights could be the straw that breaks Canada's back.

One of Canada's leading constitutional authorities, Thomas Courchene of Queen's University, suggested recently that English Canadians may, in effect, have to choose between Quebec and the Charter. Similar views have been expressed by several of the country's leading political scientists.

The universal doesn't justify the particular

This debate over the Charter will affect our constitutional discussions in other ways as well. Many English (and French) Canadians are trying to give arguments as to why Canada should remain whole, why it should continue to exist. In doing so they point to supposed values such as toleration, equality or rights. But it needs to be emphasized that no claim to individual rights, nor, indeed, any claim to purportedly universal values, is in principle capable of providing the justification for a particular country.

In purely formal terms, any argument that intends to be intellectually coherent and that maintains that Quebec should be a part of Canada must not at the same time be an argument whose logical consequence is that Canada should be part of the U.S. For example, a criticism of nationalism implies not only a criticism of a possible Quebec state but also of the Canadian state. An appeal to universal and homogeneous rights could justify, in principle, not only a federal Canada but a federal North America. In short no appeal to supposedly *universal* features can justify a *particular* country. Universal principles can only justify a universal state.

As George Grant said many years ago: *This can be seen clearly if one looks beneath the attractive rhetoric of Mr. Trudeau's statement to the U.S. Congress. The statement that the breakup of Canada would be "a crime against the history of humanity" must seem attractive to us at the first hearing. But what is stated in the actual words? They imply that "the history of humanity" moves forward to bigger and bigger political units, and that any step away from that movement is a step backward. But if that is a true account of history, why should anybody ever have cared that Canada itself exists and should continue to exist? If "the history of humanity" calls for ever more comprehensive units, why should we not all welcome the integration of Canada into the bigger unity of the American empire?*
(J. Laxer and R. Laxer, *The Liberal Idea of Canada,* p. ii).

A particular country can only be justified in particular terms — by pointing to certain desirable features of the country *itself.* It needs to be an appeal to history, character and idiosyncrasy. Any appeal to preserve this country which does not reach beyond a stress on equality or rights will find that it has sabotaged the very thing that it claims to defend.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

Toronto offers waste reduction tips for businesses

TORONTO (CNW) — Entrepreneurs and owners of small businesses in the city of Toronto will be able to learn more about waste reduction on Wednesday, September 18.

A free workshop, presented jointly by the city's department of public works and the environment, and by Metro Toronto's works department, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Toronto city hall.

The workshop will highlight how businesses can do waste audits to determine the types and amounts of garbage and recyclable materials they generate. It will include tips on how to dispose of these materials in economically and environmentally responsible ways.

Workshop speakers will explain Metro Toronto's waste management policies, as well as fees and bans at landfills. They will also describe funding and assistant programs available to small businesses for waste reduction and recycling projects.

For more information and to register, please contact Anne Wheatley, Material Reduction Co-ordinator, City of Toronto Department of Public Works and the Environment, (416) 392-1040, or Tom Richard, Recycling Advisor, Metro Toronto Works Department, 392-4200.

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Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

Speaking in the nowadays correct and sanitized language, I would say that Monsieur, who rates 12 per cent approval, is electorally severely challenged; yet my sources (always reliable) deny that there is any truth to the rumour that the P.C. backroom boys have asked Boris Yeltsin to stand for the Conservative Party's leadership nomination. Another rumour in Ottawa had it that Monsieur was highly dissatisfied with the performance of our current Minister of External Affairs Barbara McDougall. I guess the shoes of Joe Clark were a couple of sizes too big to step into.

★★★

Canada's Supreme Court made it all the way into the *New York Times* with its decision that allows for the inclusion of a rape victim's history in trials about sexual assault. Women's groups all over the country were outraged about the court's ruling. The other venerable Canadian institution mentioned in the American press was Canada Post. While all over the world Marxist economic and political structures are discarded like last week's newspapers, Canada Post's management and labour unions cling stubbornly to an outdated class struggle posture. It is time that these people realize that a new age is dawning.

★★★

Things were really happening in B.C. this past week. The province's premiers who met in Whistler demanded solutions to the country's economic woes. They proposed a first ministers conference on the subject. Our prime minister pooh-poohed that proposal rather quickly.

Monsieur, who did not get a friendly reception in Kelowna, pow-wowed with his inner cabinet in Kelowna to hammer out a constitutional proposal. Constitutional Affairs Minister Joe Clark hopes that the final draft of that proposal will be composed at the next meeting to be held September 11 and 12 in Sherbrooke, Quebec. These people move from sea to shining sea, don't they?

When cabinet finally approves a draft proposal, a combined Senate-House of Commons committee will hold public hearings throughout the country. In that way the government hopes to avoid the secrecy pitfall of Meech Lake. Monsieur also decided, rather haughtily, to reject the proposal of at least three premiers who asked for a constituent assembly.

★★★

Canada's health care still eyed with great covetousness by many in the world, is under cost pressure. It has become an insatiable dragon that eats up large amounts of money. Any political St. George wanting to slay that dragon draws the sword in vain against political expediency.

Yet Quebec's Bourassa put on St. George's armour by pressing through the province's legislature a bill that makes provision for a $5.00 emergency ward fee. As far as I know it is the dragon's first defeat.

Before I carry this metaphor too far I must say that I love our current health care system. As a senior citizen with an increasing amount of annoying ailments I am a thankful recipient of its benevolence. No wonder that about 1,000 grey-haired senior citizens made it to the premier's conference in Whistler to demonstrate their concern about the future of our health care system.

★★★

Vacation time is past again. A rich acquaintance of mine just came back from a trip around the world. She announced that she didn't care for it, and told me "next year I am going some place different." I am still thinking about that remark. That lady does occasionally invite friends over for dinner. I have noticed that dinner at her house is usually served at the sound of the smoke alarm.

★★★

We visited Cape Cod this past week and saw at least a dozen of what the Book of Job in chapter 41:5 calls God's playmates: whales. Quite an emotional experience.

★★★

In papers all over the world there was a journalistic preoccupation with the traumas and triumphs in the Soviet Union. Radio, T.V. and newspapers seemed stuck in the Soviet groove. The kibitzers are still analyzing the *coup d'etat* with one analysis more fantastic than the other. Somewhere I read that the whole thing was a Gorbachev set-up. Balderdash! It simply was the great-grandmother of all foul-ups.

What still has to be sorted out is the question of winners and losers. That puzzle is by no means solved yet, although many political analysts agree that anyone or any organization that backed the coup are among the losers, with the P.L.O. suffering the biggest political loss. This Arafat with his perpetual five o'clock shadow has an infallible instinct for damaging his cause. Fact is that people from the Baltic to Beijing felt the aftershocks.

And speaking about Beijing: Deng Xiaoping, the butcher of Tiananmen Square, turned 87 years old this month. Some Chinese fear that his death will lead to a major struggle that could be bloody or end with the Army taking control.

★★★

Let me record a few items from U.S. papers. The famous Statue of Liberty has skin problems. They are caused not by acid rain but by the salty water of New York's harbour. Jim Bakker and his mascara-maiden Tammy had a good day. A Court of Appeal revoked Jim's $500,000 fine and reduced his 45-year sentence to 15 years which might make it possible for Jim to leave the clink as early as 1995. Get ready for his second coming!

On our way east we passed through Syracuse in the state of New York. The city proudly proclaims that it is the 116th best place in the world to live. And on that quaint little island named after my better half — Martha's Vineyard — the local paper noticed that on August 23 there were 130 days left in this year. I also noticed that by the dawn's early light people stood in line in front of restaurants there as if that day's breakfast were the last meal served this year.

★★★

When General Aoun fled Lebanon he did not do so with empty coffers. The Lebanese parliament demanded that he return about $35 million which accompanied him when he fled the country. Poverty is for the dumb.

★★★

People who are still killing each other: Croats and Serbs, Cambodians, Salvadorians, Nicaraguans, Jews and Arabs, Irish, and probably some more. In Winnipeg, and probably also other places, heterosexuals are trying to kill homosexuals.

Yet good things are also happening. Surgeons in Rhode Island operating on a woman's stomach removed a toothbrush that she had swallowed 16 years ago, and university students are returning to Canada back from all kinds of humanitarian missions. Don't count this human race out yet.

★★★

We visited Plymouth, Mass., a place so touristy that even the local hardware store proclaims itself a gift shop. I fled the T-shirt and fudge circuit to a cemetery where the dates on the tombstones went back to the early seventeenth century. I saw the grave of a Puritan preacher — Robert Cushman — who, so said his epitaph, "Preached a memorable sermon on the danger of self-love and the sweetness of true friendship." Although I have quite a few theological bones to pick with these Puritans, I wouldn't mind reading Robert's "memorable sermon." I also spoke to a preacher who told me that one of his parishioners had said to him: "Every sermon of yours is better than the next one."

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and a chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Churches.

Immigrants the backbone of many countries

...continued from page 1.

Host countries want newcomers to be assimilated and integrated into the existing culture. But the immigrants usually want to keep many of their distinctive traits. Those traits, when exhibited by temporary workers can be tolerated. Such workers are seen as being part of a "servant class." But a multicultural society is something else, in the mind of many traditional Europeans.

The Dutch are setting a good pace on integration of immigrants, says the *Monitor*. They encourage immigrants to vote and run for elected office five years after they arrive. This gives the newcomers a feeling of belonging. There does seem to be some tension between the Dutch government's hope that the newcomers will assimilate and the immigrant's desire to retain their culture. But the commitment of the Dutch to a multicultural society can be seen, for instance, in the government's support of Islamic elementary schools in Amsterdam.

'We are all foreigners'

People mistrust foreigners, are afraid of them, writes Elie Wiessel. But then he turns that around by adding, "I am a foreigner in someone else's eyes. We are all foreigners."

The immigration problem will never be solved. Desperate people will arrive in Italy from Albania, they will risk their lives to leave Vietnam, and terror-stricken Africans will walk across international borders in east Africa. But plans can be made and the European Community knows there must be something of a unified approach among its member nations, notes the *Monitor*. One such step is to set up a 25-member "migrants forum" of representatives of immigrant communities in each of the 12 member nations. The forum would give immigrants a voice in the developing discussion concerning themselves.

It has also been pointed out that the right kind of economic help must be given to areas like Africa and Eastern Europe to make life there more attractive. Factories need to be moved to impoverished areas in Africa, for instance. Governments in some countries should be pressured to be more humane.

Europe used to be a place from which people emigrated. Canada and the United States are among the nations which were initially populated by European immigrants. Today many Europeans feel under seige by incoming foreigners. Yet migration can be a positive force in world affairs, even though immigrants are vulnerable people.

"The challenge for governments and public officials," says Howard LaFranchi, "will be to make the bumpy road to a multicultural European society as smooth and accident-free as possible."

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Editorial

God's glorious works were manhandled by a guest preacher

On August 18 a Christian Reformed pastor from Brooklyn, New York, named Steve Schlissel preached a sermon in the Trinity CRC of St. Catharines, Ont. The sermon was entitled "God's Glorious Works of Division." It was a chilling message that praised the council of Trinity for its plans to leave the CRC this year and encouraged the members to also leave the ship and enter the lifeboats that may bring them to another ship of common confessing churches. Schlissel compared the Christian Reformed Church to the *Titanic,* "which was a great ship," he said, "but when it went down all that was needed was a lifeboat and leadership."

The most theologically weak part of the sermon was the speaker's attempt to lump together God's acts of separation during the days of creation (the separation of land and water, darkness and light, male and female) with God's acts of separation on the Day of Judgment (the sheep from the goats). The two sets of acts have very little in common! The goats, according to the text from Revelation 21, are "the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practise magic arts, the idolaters and all liars." The rest of the sermon made plain that in Schlissel's mind the goats are also most of the leaders in the Christian Reformed Church.

"God is a dividing God," Schlissel said with passion at the conclusion of his sermon. "Which side are you on? Amen."

The line of division

The most disturbing part of the sermon was the speaker's misapplication of what some Reformed people call "the antithesis," but what most know as the enmity that God places between good and evil or the snake (Satan) and the woman's seed (Christ). The antithesis is an enmity that exists between two kingdoms, and by implication between the citizens of the two kingdoms. Christians who are humble realize that the antithesis also runs right through their own hearts whenever they fall into sin and ally themselves temporarily with the kingdom of Satan. But the antithesis is certainly not an imaginary line that separates Christians from Christians.

We saw from the Gulf War how deadly "friendly fire" can be. One third of the coalition casualties were a result of allied soldiers accidently firing on their own troops. Friendly fire may have been well intentioned, but it kills and maims just as surely as does enemy fire. In fact to be killed by friendly fire is more tragic than to be killed by enemy fire. The same holds true for Christians fighting Christians.

Yet this sad and tragic reality is being sought not accidentally but purposefully by Rev. Schlissel. It's strange that he should encourage this kind of separation in a host church when the church he serves, Messiah's Congregation in Brooklyn, is showing no official signs of leaving the denomination. Why is Schlissel still a pastor in a denomination he joined only five years ago when he tells people in his congregational prayer that God's "Spirit has told us to come out from among them?"

Glory in reconciliation

Schlissel talked about God's wondrous works of separation. What about God's wondrous works of reconciliation? When it is the power of the blood of Jesus Christ that brings reconciliation between God and people, people and people, who are we to set up other criteria for separation, such as one's *view* on the ordination of women and one's *view* on the creation/science issue. Since when are people saved by views?

It is a tragic thing when church leaders determine that their view of Scripture can lay down a line of division between believers. Schlissel's preoccupation with God's work of division reminds painfully of all the unnecessary schisms that have torn the body of Christ asunder. This is not to say that only one side is or was to blame in these unhappy ecclesiastical divorces. But to glory in these schisms! It also reminds very sadly of the former South African policy of racial separation called *apartheid.* If one believed staunch defenders of that policy then God was gloriously separating whites from browns and browns from blacks.

Judge a tree by its fruit

According to Jesus, the Kingdom belongs to those who are like little children. Jesus calls for humility, not arrogance. Jesus is the vine and we are the branches. Branches must bear fruit if they want to stay on the vine, although the vineyard keeper will be quite long-suffering and allow for a season of no fruit.

What is the fruit that determines whether we stay on the vine? In other parts of Scripture Jesus tells us that we will be judged according to whether we visited him in prison, came to him while he was sick, clothed and fed him when he was destitute. There is a clear reduction of the marks of the Christian life or of the Christian church in Schlissel's call to separate from those who hold different views on certain issues.

We must, of course, discern between truth and error. Every church needs a confessional and church polity framework within which to operate. A good understanding of church order and a sound formulation of doctrine is very important. But it is one thing to shape a doctrinal base and it is quite another to condemn those who have different beliefs to the eternal garbage heap. Let's avoid the schismatic and judgmental mindset so prevalent in thinking like Schlissel's.

The real antithesis lies between those who hate and those who love. Which side are you on?

(Next week we hope to write more about the marks of the true church and affiliation with a particular denomination.)

BW

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS

A reflection

The other day a friend of mine admonished me "to stop being so busy doing" and "take the time to do some reflecting." His comments resonate others' observations this summer of being "too energetic" or "high-spirited." It makes me wonder what people conclude about the mental and contemplative activities of those who appear to be physically active. When I compare my present wallpapering activity with colleagues who are also preparing for a new academic year, my self-demands could be depicted as languishing rather than effervescent.

Some years ago I attended a banquet in which the speaker was the founder of the Birthright Association. She described how she formed the idea of Birthright while she was changing sheets on her children's beds. We laughed appropriately at the image of political/social ideas being born during such mundane activities as bed-making. Yet, looking back on that moment, the laughter was really inappropriate. Because who is to say when the best ideas, the deepest reflections, the greatest insights into self and others occur?

Mind isn't weighted down by cobblestones

For many men and women there are activities which, while keeping them physically engaged, enable their spirits and their ideas to soar. I think of the cobble street-makers we observed in Europe this summer; each stone meticulously pounded beside the next in an almost reflexive action while the cobbler could contemplate the state of the world. I think of the mounds of ironing my sister loves to do as she gazes out of her attic window above the rooftops of her Dutch city home. I think of all the many repetitive, hand-filling activities which seem to go of their own accord while the mind travels, past and future, or contemplates the present navel.

Crucial to mentally disengaged, physical doing is "sameness." That which is reflexive or repetitive does not demand the same measure of concentrated attention or adrenalin rush to detract from a soaring spirit or creative empowerment. The dishwashing, dusting, vacuuming, window wiping, barbecueing homemaker can be (and more often should be) the most creative, contemplative and reflective person in the household. However, the kilometer-guzzling traveller whose eyes no longer seem to focus on the road is one example of mentally disengaged doing that is the consequence of a dangerous sameness called sensory deprivation. Too much sameness causes accidents; too little sameness contributes to sensory overload and mettle fatigue.

Need for variety

The key to maintaining a healthy balance between sensory deprivation and sensory overstimulation brings us to a self-awareness of our needs for variety. The homemaker requires some variety to stimulate reflection while doing; the hyperactive sensation-seeker needs moments of rest to recuperate. No single key will unlock the reflective chambers of all our hearts; no simple admonition will arrest the onset of fatigue. Self-awareness does demand that we take time to reflect on what our varied needs are. The dilemma is not one of finding time for doing and/or reflecting, but of reflecting *while* doing to become aware of where our balance lies.

My present wallpapering activity may not earn me great housekeeping awards but it has enabled me to reflect on where the importance of a smooth wall is to be placed in my life's priorities.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of educational psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Letter

A publisher's pain and a subscriber's excuse

The following note came to us from a lapsed subscriber in response to a "We have missed you" letter sent by our publisher Stan de Jong. The letter from de Jong started this way: "Your subscription to Calvinist Contact *ran out some time ago and we've noticed that you have NOT renewed your subscription.* That's always painful to us." *The subscriber writes back:*

I am very sorry to read in your letter that we have caused you pain due to our not renewing our subscription. We had no idea! You also state that, whatever the reasons for not renewing, you'd appreciate hearing about them. Well, let me try and explain....

I was writing out cheques one night while watching the Blue Jays on TV, when at the bottom of the ninth, two out, the count was 3 and 2, the score Jays 3, Orioles 3, Joe Carter lifted a homer out of the 'Dome.' I got so excited, knocked over my drink, spilled it all over your subscription form and the cheque made out to *Calvinist Contact,* and... you know the rest.

If you don't believe that one, how about...

I was writing out a cheque to you when my pen ran out of ink. I searched in vain for one of the 279 pens known to be in our house and could find only a pencil. No? Don't believe that one either?

Okay, how about...

My cheque must have gotten lost in the mail... *or* I gave it to your receptionist, you know the one with the red hair.

I know you've heard them all before so I may as well admit it — I just plain forgot.

Please renew my subscription immediately not only to relieve your pain but also so that I may enjoy Bert's editorials again (Bert, I'm starting to agree with you more often — either you are mellowing or I've been brainwashed), so I may read the newsworthy church-related items, the open dialogue in the letters to the editor, and, last but not least, P & M (very refreshing!).

May the Lord continue to bless you all as you seek to keep the vision alive through Christian journalism.

Ted VanGeest
St. Catharines, Ont.

Beachcombing

Now that the summer days are getting shorter, at least in the northern hemisphere, and vacations are only a faint memory, we invite you to place yourself once more on a beach with the following reflection piece reprinted from Reaching Out, *a prison ministry publication of M2/W2.*

Crashing waves sounded in our ears and the surf licked at our feet as my son and I searched for seashells.

It was obvious that the beach had been picked over — I wasn't finding anything worth keeping. However, my son was finding one treasure after another and putting them into my beach hat for safekeeping.

I looked condescendingly at his collection. They were...small and ordinary, mostly bits and pieces of shell. My son seemed determined to save every broken remnant.

"When," I wondered, "will he learn to be more discriminating?"

Unaware of my attitude, my son thrust each new prize under my nose to be admired. Then I began to see the shells through his eyes.

Some glowed with delicate pastel hues. Others had precisely sculpted bumps and ridges. A few were broken so their spiraling cores were exposed. Each had unique loveliness.

"Jesus," I thought, "is like a beachcomber." He finds humanity
washed up,
battered,
stranded by sinfulness.
What if Jesus chose to comb the sands as I do, holding out for wholeness and perfection? We would all be lost.

Instead, he moves among us just as my son combs the beach. No matter how often we have been rejected by others, he sees us as special treasures. He picks us up, washes us and keeps us close to him. Our Lord can put our broken lives together again.

As we respond to his love, new beauty and worth are revealed in each one of us.
(borrowed from Margaret Parker '86)

Act as if

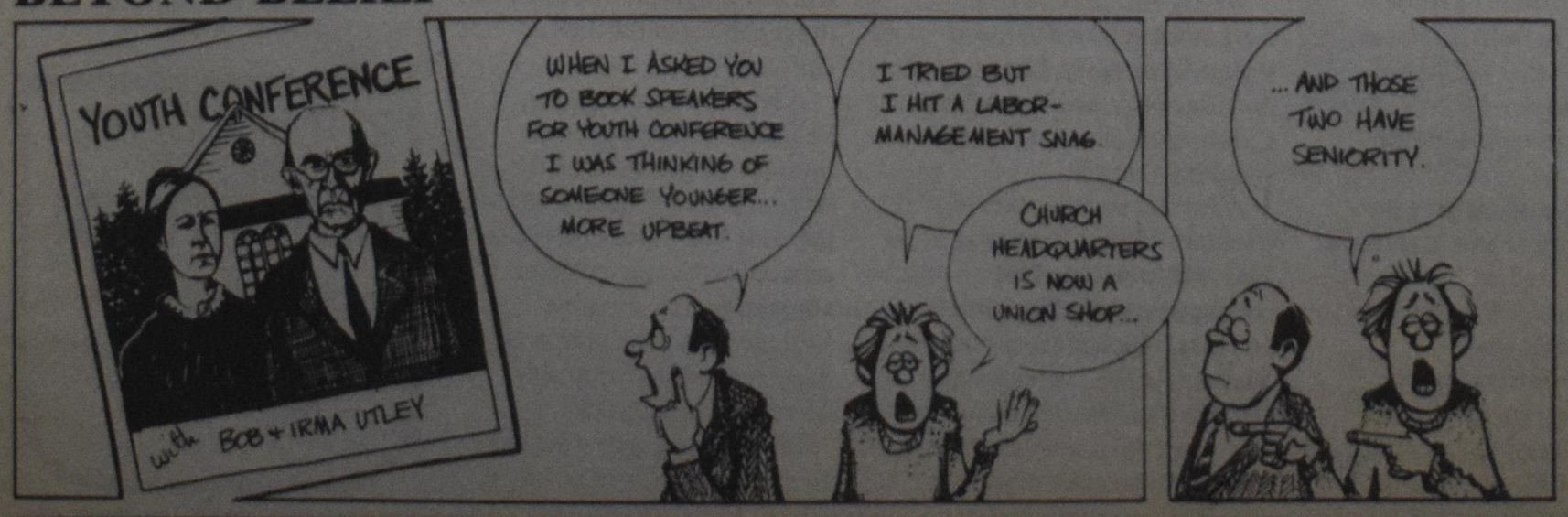
Canada Post is on strike and we're not getting any letters from our readers. So, we'll use a little wisdom from the Greeks to comment on the postal strike and fill up the letter space as well.

Socrates, after describing his ideal state (which no doubt excludes a postal system) asked his disciples whether such a state could be established. They said that they supposed not. Socrates then said that he did not either. "But," he added, "the wise man will always live as though he were a citizen of such a community, no matter what the society around him actually is like."

Not bad advice for Christians, who may not see the kingdom in everything around them, but should act as citizens of that kingdom, nevertheless.

BW

BEYOND BELIEF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... AND THOSE TWO HAVE SENIORITY.

Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

The pastorate: it's hard on your body

H. Eikelboom
(Translated by Bert Witvoet)

Pastors lead a very unhealthy life. They constantly risk their health for the spiritual well-being of their dear parishioners. It's a miracle that most of them reach the average life-span age and their pension.

I don't mean to say that they work long weeks and that they're up until Saturday midnight sweating away on their Sunday sermons. Nor do I mean that their job demands a lot of creativity, mobility and capacity for empathy so that they are constantly under stress and almost forget to breathe. All of that is, of course, less than beneficial for one's bodily well-being. But that's not what I am talking about today.

Today I am addressing a piece of ministerial sorrow that has been sorely neglected. Nobody wants to talk about it. And no wonder.

Ministers often talk with their mouths full. They don't do that voluntarily. Nor is it that they don't know good etiquette. On the contrary, most ministers have received a proper upbringing. They have come from the decent middle-class. And when you come from that class you know from early youth on that it just won't do to talk with your mouth full. If you have something worthwhile to say you first empty your mouth.

That never was a problem for me. As a child I experienced the war and then your mouth was soon empty. I was able to talk a lot at that time. No, ministers don't talk with their mouths full because they want to. Rather, they're forced to. They have to if they want to get to the Word. The cause of it lies in the congregation.

Treats

As soon as pastors hit the trail of "home visiting" a flood of cookies, cakes, pastry, chocolates, glasses of wine or lemonade comes their way. The pastorate finds its way through a mountain of pastry. It's almost impossible to row against the stream of steadily increasing treats.

And things are not getting any better. It used to be that you were satisfied with a simple cookie or a plain piece of cake, now they place a whole Black Forest cake in front of your nose, fresh from the freezer. "I figured you would come by one of these days." Sometimes the lemonade rises to your lips. And your stomach is full of the congregation. You need plenty of sanitary stops to relieve both body and soul and to separate the spirit from the flesh.

Struggle

It becomes a life-and-death struggle. More tins appear on the table, filled with other treats. Bottles of wine are uncorked; tins of apple juice opened. You manage to decline, even though your power to resist is weakening considerably. You realize you have to choose between our own temporal bodily well-being and the eternal salvation of the soul of the other person. When eventually the bottle of sherry enters the fray, you yield. "All right, a small glass, then. Just to be sociable."

Of course, you run the risk of becoming addicted and, indeed, this has happened to some colleagues. Sometimes it becomes a way of escaping troubles.

Unhealthy

I remember a very stubborn woman of advanced age who, after I had repeatedly declined all her offers, placed a large glass of sherry in front of me. I looked at the glass somewhat despairingly. Then the telephone in the hall rang. I was left alone with my unwanted beverage. An enormously large container with dried out plants stood next to me. With a quick gesture I emptied the contents of my glass in the container. Relieved I looked around. There, that was that. A little later the woman re-entered the room. She immediately spotted my empty glass. "Oh, you have already finished it. And you were trying to tell me that you did not want any! You should not be so modest. I'll pour you another glass."

Being a pastor is an unhealthy vocation. And you can't share your story with anyone. People tend to take it ill of you that you don't appreciate the generosity of your people. Your audience sits there, mouth watering, as you list all the items you declined. Only your spouse, who has no need for an overweight pastor, looks at you suspiciously. And at suppertime you don't get dessert. "You had your share today." That's all you needed.

The moral of this story: the pastorate may be good for the souls of the congregation but it's extremely bad for the body of the pastor. Whoever wants to survive this job should visit congregation members as little as possible, and certainly avoid all birthday parties.

Alas, also with the minister, the way to the heart is through the stomach.

Reprinted from Kerkinformatie *June 1991.*

Canadian Catholics support bishops' ministries

OTTAWA (CCCB) — On September 22, the hundreds of parishes in the Catholic Church nationwide will hold a special annual collection supporting the work of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB).

The CCCB, created in 1943, is the national association of Canada's bishops. It acts as a service organization for its bishop members, undertaking national and international work on their behalf.

The CCCB is active in issues of peace, immigration, ecumenism, protecting the unborn, social justice in Canada and the Third World, human rights, relations with the Holy See and with other episcopal conferences.

Within the past few months the CCCB has condemned violence against women in Canada, called for improved legislation to protect the unborn, and urged the Canadian government to promote a peaceful and negotiated end to the violence in Yugoslavia.

The conference's work is conducted by committees and commissions led by the bishop members. They, in turn, call upon the services of a secretariat, comprised of professional lay and religious staff centred in Ottawa.

All our actions for the glory of God

The CCCB budget for 1990 was $4.2 million. The money is raised by a per capita contribution from each diocese. To assist them in raising this amount, each September the dioceses hold what is called the "Bishops' Collection for the Needs of the Church in Canada."

The theme for this year's collection is: "The Word in Action." A kit, which includes posters and detailed information on the work of the CCCB, has been sent to parishes.

Bishop Robert Lebel, immediate past president of the CCCB, says "the Word in Action" theme is inspired by the scriptural readings for Sunday, Sept. 22.

"All of our actions, whether they be prayer, work or helping those most in need, should be undertaken for the greater glory of God. All of the work which is supported by the Bishops' Collection is done in this spirit. It is the generosity of parishioners which allows the bishops to pursue pastoral activities, 'the Word in Action' in today's world."

The CCCB has 121 members, a figure which includes retired bishops. There are 73 Latin and Oriental Rite dioceses and archdioceses in Canada.

Christian student leaders from 100 nations meet

Robert VanderVennen
from an IFES release

WHEATON, Ill. — Representatives of evangelical Christian campus ministries from around the world met recently at Wheaton College, one of the foremost evangelical colleges in North America, for the quadrennial meeting of the World Assembly of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES).

The IFES is the umbrella organization of autonomous national InterVarsity Christian Fellowship groups in 130 nations. Each nation's leadership is free to adapt to conditions and address its culture in the way they see fit. These World Assembly meetings keep leaders in touch with each other and bind the organization together.

Notable growth of student movements in Bolivia, Nepal, Poland and other nations in Eastern Europe were highlighted in reports at the conference.

The IFES student group at the University of San Marcos in Bolivia reported on unprecedented response to an intensive seven-week evangelistic outreach and training program for staff in the region. Regional secretary Dieter Brepohl announced plans to stage four similiar projects in the coming year in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Colombia and Chile.

Newly admitted to IFES were student movements in Poland, Hungary, Nepal, Angola, Belgium, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and French-speaking Canada.

A former staff worker in Vietnam's Inter-Varsity Fellowship rejoined his colleagues for the first time in 16 years. He chose to remain in Vietnam in 1975 when Saigon fell. He was imprisoned for five and a half years and testifies that many people were converted and churches grew in his country after 1975.

It was reported that student movements affiliated with IFES are doing pioneering work in Bulgaria, Romania and the republics of the Soviet Union.

A leader of the Nigerian Fellowship of Evangelical Students, believed to be the largest IFES affiliate, said that the Gulf War earlier this year caused increasing tensions among Muslim students. Violence against Christians occurred on two campuses where the group works.

In 1995 the group will likely meet either in Kenya or Ivory Coast. The new general secretary of IFES is Lindsay Brown of Wales, replacing the retiring Chua Wee Hian of Singapore, who has served for nearly 20 years.

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Crew of missionary ship *M.V. Doulos* bombed in Philippines, two dead

ZAMBOANGA, Philippines (EP) — Two were killed and 32 injured Aug. 10 when a hand grenade was exploded among crew members of the *M. V. Doulos,* a missionary ship operated by Operation Mobilization (OM).

Karen Goldsworthy of New Zealand and Sofia Sigfridsson of Sweden, both 19, were killed when an unidentified assailant threw a hand grenade among 70 crew members who were holding an evening presentation in a passenger terminal building near where the ship was docked. A second grenade thrown into the group did not explode.

The *M. V. Doulos* carries Christian literature to a variety of countries of the world, operated by an international team of about 300 volunteers. The blast occurred in an off-ship location inside the port terminal building during a presentation of the ship's "International Night," a "goodwill event as part of the program of the ship *Doulos,* a ministry of the international missionary agency Operation Mobilization," according to officials.

No group has claimed responsibility for the act, although it is suspected that the assailant belonged to an extremist Muslim group based on the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, according to Keith Haywood, director of personnel for the U.S. office of Operation Mobilization.

Although there is "no confirmed motive for the attack," Haywood said, "the day before the attack there was a visit by an international team from the ship to a local school. During a discussion with some of the students, it was reported that one of the team members said something that insulted some of the students about their religion. He was reported to have said or implied that Mohammed [founder of the Islamic faith] was a liar. So on hearing about the school meeting, a group of Muslim student leaders from Western Mindanao University came to the *Doulos* to discuss the matter."

He continued, "The student delegation was met by *Doulos* Director Bernd Gulker and Rev. DeJesus, a veteran Filipino Christian worker among Muslims for the past 50 years. The situation appeared to be resolved and the students seemed to appreciate the opportunity to express their concerns."

"In preparation for the ship's visit to Zamboanga, care was taken to instruct personnel on board to be sensitive to the local culture and religious feelings," said OM officials. "We always do that," Haywood added. "It is our intention to show respect to all peoples, their cultures, political systems and religions. Our aim is to communicate positively and demonstrate God's love for every human being." OM denies that any member of their group said or implied that Mohammed was a liar.

No confirmed motive

"After the [bombing] incident on Saturday night, there was a person apprehended with a grenade who managed to escape from police," Haywood added. "But since the incident local police have arrested and questioned several suspects and there isn't any confirmed motive for the attack." Those arrested were suspected separatist guerrillas from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), Haywood explained. MNLF is an extremist Muslim terrorist group trying to claim Mindanao for a separate Islamic state.

"One of the guys that was arrested told the police...that the reason for the attack was what this particular ship member had said," noted Haywood, who added, "Western University President, Erdulfo Fernando, also denied the report that this person had called Mohammed a liar in public, saying no one from the group spoke except for the vessel's captain, Pertti Merisalo, and he did not [say anything about Mohammed]. He actually thanked the school for awarding the ship a plaque of appreciation."

Police have also expressed their doubts that this act of terrorism was motivated by individual comments by any member of the ship's crew, Haywood said. "A respected Muslim leader, Abdul Gani Yussof, denounced the attack as 'a dastardly act.'"

OM operates two ships, the *Logos II* — which replaced the *Logos* after it ran aground in 1988 — and the *Doulos*, which has been sailing since 1978. "We've had other tragedies," Haywood said, "but they were accidental, nothing of this nature."

Bible Notebook

son, be admc many books *there is* no end; and much study *is* a weariness of the flesh. Ac.19.19.

Reading, Da.5.
Or, *much reading.*
p.p.ch.1.18.

Al Wolters

Uriah the Hittite

"You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites" (2 Sam. 12:9).

The beginning of the summer I had the opportunity to spend several weeks in Amman, the capital of Jordan, in order to do research on some ancient inscriptions that are housed in the Archeological Museum there. The museum in question is situated on the top of "the Citadel," the most ancient part of Amman. It came as something of a shock to me to realize that the place where I spent many hours puzzling over an ancient Hebrew document was in fact in the centre of the biblical city of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites, and that therefore Uriah the Hittite had been killed only a few hundred yards from where I was working.

We all know the story of how David committed adultery with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and how, when she became pregnant, David tried to cover up his sin by calling Uriah home from the military campaign against the Ammonites so that he would sleep with his wife and make it appear that her child was legitimate. And we know how David's stratagem failed because of Uriah's sense of solidarity with his comrades in the field, and how the king then instructed Joab to put Uriah in a military position where he was bound to be killed by the Ammonites, so that David could marry Bathsheba. And we know how David's sin was exposed by the prophet Nathan, how David repented, and how he had to bear the terrible consequences of his disobdience. The whole disastrous history is recorded in 2 Samuel 11 - 12.

History with a difference

My visit to Amman roughly 3,000 years after Uriah was killed there has given me occasion to reflect again on this familiar story. It strikes me once again how the history of Israel as recorded in the Bible is different from history as recorded in the annals of the nations surrounding Israel. Whereas the latter tend to glorify the exploits of their kings, and to omit or gloss over their defeats and failings, the Bible is explicit about the grievous sins of the leading human actors in the history of salvation, all the way from Adam and Abraham in the Old Testament to Peter and Paul in the New. And here we have David, from whose loins was to come forth the Saviour of the world, graphically portrayed as an adulterer and murderer.

Lessons

There are many lessons that can be learned from this episode of biblical history: that even the most godly are capable of heinous crimes; that the attempt to cover up one sin often leads to an even greater sin; that murder is still murder when it is brought about through the orchestration of events; that God may well punish a sin severely and yet maintain the sinner in high office.

But it seems to me that the most basic point lies elsewhere: that God works his saving purposes right in and through the sin and repentance of his fallible covenant partners. It is nothing short of amazing that the second son born to David and Bathsheba, after the first one had died because of the shameful affair surrounding Uriah the Hittite, was none other than Solomon, the next link in the Messianic chain leading to Jesus of Nazareth.

In the extraordinary way which is so characteristic of him, God makes his Kingdom come despite the failings of Abraham and Paul, of David and Solomon, and of you and me — in fact, he makes those very failings the mirrors of his grace.

Al Wolters is associate professor of religion/theology and classical languages at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Hindu Nepal easing restrictions on Christians

KATMANDU, Nepal (EP) — The Hindu kingdom of Nepal, sandwiched between India and China in the Himalayan Mountains, has "come one step closer to allowing Christians total religious freedom by allowing them a day off work to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ," according to a report from Gospel for Asia (GFA). After centuries of persecuting Christians, democratic uprisings led to the release of more than 100 Christians who had been "imprisoned for their faith in wretched, dungeon-like prisons. Their crime was sharing their faith with others."

But now Nepal, which once boasted it was the only Hindu kingdom on earth, has begun to adopt a more tolerant attitude toward other faiths. This began nearly a year ago, when King Birendra set forth a new constitution that allowed various religious groups to assemble and have freedom of expression. The document stopped short of allowing religious groups to convert others, however.

"This remains an item for prayer," according to GFA, which supports 79 Nepali missionaries who are working to win their own people to the Lord.

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Features

Sjanie's dolls

Lini Richarda Grol

Ever since Sjanie Tuk came to Canada from the Netherlands, she has loved the traditional Canadian way of eating corn on the cob. But one day five years ago as she stripped the husks from some corn cobs, she suddenly saw secret beauty and tremendous possibilities in those husks.

Sjanie and her husband, Jan, with their two small children, left their family in Klaaswaal and Goudswaard, Holland, in 1952 to come to Canada — where two more children were born.

Sjanie had knitted, embroidered and crocheted since she was a little girl. She had to; she was the eldest in a family with five younger boys and an ailing mother. All too soon, Sjanie's father had to depend on her. Out of sheer necessity she knitted for her brothers, her parents and herself.

At an early age she made and designed her own clothes by making-over any old clothes that came her way. Her skills with a needle came in handy when her own four youngsters came along and grew up in Canada. After her children started school Sjanie tried to up-grade her own education by taking mail-order courses from the Department of Education.

Today she is rightfully proud of her diploma as a qualified secretary with communication skills.

Sjanie and Jan are active in their church, the Reformed Church in America, where for years, prior to the arrival of a computer in their church, they produced the church bulletin. Jan still plays the organ in church services, and both he and Sjanie are active in the transportation, visits and running errands for residents of a senior citizens home in their neighbourhood.

Since Jan retired from Stelco he is fulfilling a secret dream — taking flying lessons. One day he hopes to fly solo. Considering his age that takes courage and determination. He works hard on his dream.

Distinct personalities

And so does his wife. Ever since Sjanie discovered the beauty of corn husks she has worked with them. With trial and error, diligently studying craft books, she learned how to prepare and treat the husks so they can be plied and bent to her will and design. Soon she was making flower arrangements and dolls from the husks. But not the corn dolls we all know.

Her dolls are different; they have a distinct personality; they are "character dolls." Some are elegant society ladies in (corn) silk dresses with ribbons, jewelry and dainty shoes. Others are down-to-earth figures of a family at work or play, mostly based on her past in the Netherlands — like one girl in the typical *Volendammer* costume.

One set of dolls, perhaps because of the colours used, reminds one of Delft Blue figurines, except that these groups are based on Sjanie's family.

The father sits peeling potatoes while his wife is bent over her knitting. In another group, the father reads a letter while the mother sweeps the floor and the children, a girl and a boy, play with their toys. Sjanie's groups of dolls are most lifelike and reflect the harmony that should exist in a family.

One day Sjanie tried to make a clown but had trouble with his shoes, so she took up some clay. At once she discovered, to her joy, the amazing things she could do with clay. Now Sjanie even sculpts in clay and is delighted when she finds it responds to her hands, giving her figurines that certain expression, gesture or detail that just could not be achieved with the husks.

Sjanie does not count or keep track of the time she spends on each figurine, but each one from start to finish may take several days.

Perfecting the details

Patiently she works on perfecting her dolls, down to the tiniest details which complement the figurine: the place of a ribbon, the line of an elegant dress, a frilly or flamboyant hat, the colour of a costume, the lace on a dress, the hairstyle, a pretty purse or perhaps a minute umbrella. With every new idea Sjanie refines those details and so improves on her work.

"A letter from home..." by Sjanie Tuk. Photos: Lini Grol

When Sjanie found out that in time, cornhusks have a tendency to become brittle and break, she worried about her dolls and worked on a method to make them more durable. At 65 Sjanie is far from idle. The joy she finds in her work can be seen in her dainty figurines, especially in the exquisite finishing touches. A display of her corn husk figurines at the Central Public Library in Hamilton, Ont., brought her letters of admiration, and now other libraries are interested in displaying her work.

> ***"The joy she finds in her work can be seen in her dainty figurines..."***

The next display will be in Niagara Falls, Ont., at the Victoria Avenue Public Library in March 1992. In the meantime she keeps on working on more and different figures and flowers. Today her work has a place of honour in homes in Holland and in Canada.

Sjanie is brimful of ideas for details and can hardly wait to try them out. These details make her dolls unique; no two of them are ever the same. Sjanie is eager to learn and to expand her knowledge by reading up on every craft media and trying out new skills. Who knows where her search will eventually lead? No doubt before long, her work will be discovered by collectors who'll snatch them up as soon as she has one finished. Sjanie and her hobbie are leaving a beautiful mark on her community, her family, and friends — a mark of which they can be truly proud. And they are.

Sjanie Tuk at work.

Lini Grol is a scissor-cutting artist and free-lance writer living in Fonthill, Ont.

Do you believe the Holy Spirit is active today?

Ralph A. Siebring

When I write about my personal experiences, I end up relating something about the inner relationship between God and myself. Should I not keep these private happenings to myself, I wonder. Since the Apostle Paul did not keep his personal experiences to himself (thank God for that), there is no reason why I should not follow his example. Those of the readers familiar with the lives of Corrie Ten Boom and Brother Andrew will only find confirmation in what I am going to say. Those who live close to the Lord know that the Holy Spirit is just as active today as he was in the early days of the church. Let me relate four personal experiences of the Spirit's activity to demonstrate the truth of that statement.

The first experience: narrow escape

When the Gestapo had surrounded our house in the Netherlands in September 1944, I knew exactly for whom they had come. The evening before I had helped an Allied airman. His plane had been shot down a few days before and he had bailed out. To make a long story short, I dropped him off at a safe place. Somebody must have seen me and reported me to the Germans.

Now I had to face the consequences of my action. It was two o'clock in the morning and my parents were already downstairs. Having only a few minutes left I directed a "telegram prayer" to heaven: "Dear God, help me, for this is getting out of hand. Please take over."

It is perhaps the simplest prayer I have ever prayed. Later I discovered that it is also one of the most scriptural prayers. We read in Psalm 50:15, "Call on me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honour me." I was in serious trouble and needed all the help I could get. That the Lord does things in his own efficient way was something that didn't enter my mind.

The interrogation that followed was very strange. I said things I didn't want to say and I didn't say things I wanted to say. You see, I had lost control over my voice. The end of the story was the verdict: "This young man is a victim of circumstances." I had asked the Lord to take over and that is exactly what he did. The Bible says, "But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. Then you will be given what to say, for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you" (Matthew 10:19).

During the interrogation a strange warm feeling came over me and it felt as if the air became very heavy. I blamed it on my nerves. My parents inquired, "How come you were so calm and didn't show any fear?"

"God," I thought. But as a Reformed 20-year-old boy you don't say things like that. Our pastor had said in our confession of faith class, "Personal experience is subjective and should be kept to yourselves."

The second experience: amazing healing

Another miracle took place in the early '70s. I was at that time an elder in the Alliance and Missionary Church (I rejoined the CRC in 1989). On a certain Sunday the pastor requested the elders to meet in his study immediately after the service. When we did, the pastor explained that an elderly woman in the congregation had cancer. Because of her age and physical condition, she needed two operations.

"She underwent the first operation about two weeks ago," the pastor said. "The second one is scheduled for this coming Thursday. Unfortunately, last week cancer broke out in her ear, nose and lips." The woman requested the laying on of hands in response to James 5:14,15: "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up."

The pastor explained the procedure to be followed. He would explain the Scripture verses quoted and anoint her with oil. After that "you do what the Spirit tells you to do." I did not believe in this kind of healing and was sure the Spirit was not going to speak to me.

I decided to watch the procedure with one eye closed and one eye open, just to make sure that nothing magical was going to happen. God had other plans. He knew that there were actually two persons who needed healing. One needed physical, and the other spiritual healing.

When the woman came in the pastor explained that anointing does not guarantee healing. Although he would do what Scripture tells him to do it would be the Lord who was in control and who would determine what would happen. The woman understood perfectly the meaning of Scripture and submitted herself completely to the will of God.

The pastor had a small bottle of oil, uncorked it and made the sign of the cross on her forehead. We as elders had placed our hands upon the woman. When the first elder started to pray I felt the air getting heavy and it became very hot. Before I realized it, both my eyes were closed and as soon as the first elder finished his prayer, I started to pray. Out loud it was a prayer for healing; silently it was a prayer for my lack of faith.

The woman recovered and is still alive. As for myself, I believe that all things are possible with God. Is that not what the angel Gabriel said to Mary?

The third experience: Pentecost revisited

It was the third Sunday of April 1974. While reading a book called *Like a Mighty Wind*, written by Mel Tari, I came across something very strange. The author revealed how on Sept. 26, 1965, on the island of Timor, Indonesia, the Holy Spirit was poured out in the same manner as on the day of Pentecost.

This miracle took place in the Reformed (*Gereformeerde*) church. The author related that the fire brigade, thinking the church was on fire, came to extinguish the fire. But how can you extinguish a spiritual fire? People in the church spoke in tongues. The sick were healed. Yes, the day before the Lord's supper would be celebrated, water changed into wine (that still happens!).

I did not believe a word of that story and considered them "hallucinations" and "Pentecostal nonsense." Strangely enough, the local Pentecostal Church never shared in the miracles. Perhaps they didn't need them. Whatever the reason, in the week that followed I felt very uncomfortable with my rejection and the unsolicited judgment of a brother.

Did Mel Tari not give God the glory for the mighty events? Who gave me the right to call Brother Mel a liar? I decided to find another book written by a more reliable author, preferably by someone who was neither personally nor emotionally involved and whose credentials were above approach.

I discovered that a Dr. Koch from Switzerland had written a book called *Revival in Indonesia*. To my amazement, the author not only confirmed everything Mel Tari wrote, but mentioned many more miracles.

It was exactly 10:30 when I finished reading this amazing story. My wife and children were in bed. I was lying on the chesterfield staring at the ceiling. I started to pray, "Lord, if that is the way you still operate then I never understood the simplicity of your Word. Do you still do miracles?" I prayed for a long time, requesting insight, faith, begging forgiveness for my legalistic and rationalistic attitudes. "Lord, give me understanding. Let me know the truth. Show me who you are and who I am."

God did exactly what I asked but in an altogether different manner than I expected. What I experienced was something that was on the one hand very beautiful and on the other hand very ugly and terrible.

I had read about people claiming that their spirits left their bodies, but this I classified as belonging to the department of "weird and wonderful tales." It was nonsense in my way of thinking. Now I think quite differently because I experienced it myself.

Praying to God and asking for understanding and revelation, my spirit left my body. That is the most beautiful experience a person can have. Dying is not something drastic. On the contrary, it is a liberation. When the spirit leaves the body it is liberated from the burden of sinful living and the law of gravity is no longer in force. It feels as if you consist of air. With it comes a peace so beautiful it can't be described. There is complete contentment in this state of being. You have reached utopia.

I must say, it is a terrible experience as well. The spirit has left the body and that spirit is now looking upon a life of sin. Holiness is looking upon unholiness. When I saw that, I prayed to God, "Let me die, Lord, that I may sin no more." I experienced the holiness of God. I was thinking about my wife and children and somehow it seemed that I had to make a choice. "Lord, let me be with you."

When my spirit returned, an electrical current went throughout my body. It made me shiver. I had always been a heavy smoker and when other Christians suggested I shouldn't smoke my flippant reply had been, "Listen, you can't blame me for burning my idols." What a miserable excuse for something I was unable to control. After my out-of-the-body experience I never had the urge to smoke again.

The fourth experience: not my way

Another manifestation of the Spirit happened about four years ago. For 15 years I had been leading a home Bible study group. I always insisted that members should be from different denominations or have no church affiliation at all. Before I became involved in Bible studies I had attended a meeting of instruction for leaders. The pastor in charge mentioned that we should never correct a person. If somebody said something wrong we should not correct that person. That, in my book, was bad advice. I put up my hand and said, "Sir, do you suggest that we should not correct a person even if he or she denies the resurrection of Christ?"

Continued on page 10...

Do you believe the Holy Spirit is active today?

...continued from page 9.

"That is correct," was the unexpected answer, and seeing my frustration he continued, "Don't you think that the Holy Spirit is mighty enough to change a person's opinion? Or do you think that you should do the work of the Spirit?"

I was speechless. Nevertheless, I decided to follow his advice.

In August of that year I took up my Bible to make preparations for the coming season but something held me back. Out loud I said, "No, Satan, I will not listen." After a while, though, I knew it was not Satan but the Lord himself who was holding me back.

"OK, I'll try again next week," I thought. The following two weeks produced the same result as the first week. So I prayed, "Lord, I don't know what you have in mind; you had better take over."

The evening of our first study arrived and I was completely unprepared. Sixteen happy faces looked full of expectation towards their leader. We had newcomers. One of them was a middle-aged woman, a member of the Lutheran Church. I opened with prayer. When I had said "Amen," I said in my heart, "Lord, you do it."

Somehow I had to start. "Who are you?" I asked. "Perhaps you expect me now to ask you to introduce yourselves. That is not what I have in mind," I continued. "I'd like to know why the 17 people present look different, act different, and think different from each other. What makes you what you are? What makes you YOU?"

The Lutheran woman promptly expressed her opinion, but the later it got into the evening the less she said. I was sure she wouldn't come back.

I was wrong. She came again, hardly saying anything. The third meeting was at her house. For this meeting I had prepared 30 questions. Question Number 1 was, "How do you know what you believe is the truth?" Immediately the Lutheran woman said, "I may as well admit that I have attended many home Bible studies but I have never experienced what I do in your group. You are different. When I come home I take my Bible and read for hours. I am still searching. I don't have what you have."

It was deathly silent. Everyone was praying silently. I could feel a heavy warm pressure around me and had a hard time fighting my emotions.

How do you handle a situation like this? Some suggested praying and that is what we did. Then I asked, "You want to become a Christian?" She replied, "Oh, do I ever." What a sacred moment! Looking at her with love and compassion I said, "In every meeting I have mentioned James 4:2, 'You do not have, because you do not ask God.' Why do you not ask him? 'Ask and it will be given to you.'" Softly and almost in tears, she replied, "I will." When the meeting was over, we left very quietly.

Fifteen minutes after my wife and I had come home, the telephone rang. My wife answered. It was the Lutheran woman, all excited, "Grace, you know what? I became a Christian. Oh, I'm so happy, I can't explain." She was jubilant. Then I understood my problems and frustrations encountered in August. Give God a chance and he will make all things well.

I could tell you many more experiences, like the one I and others experienced in Romania in 1989, but I won't. My experiences will remain with me as long as I live. It is thrilling to see God in action.

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quickening powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.

"Lord, take away my critical spirit and lead me by your Holy Spirit. Amen."

Ralph Siebring heads a property management firm in Kelowna, B.C.

Securities Commission's advice to investors available in five languages

(Canadian Scene) — "Don't be pressured into making hasty investment decisions; reject high pressure solicitations" warns the Ontario Securities Commission in a booklet for the beginning investor.

The commission has, since the 1930's, been the Ontario government's watchdog over Canada's largest financial marketplace, which includes the Toronto Stock Exchange.

The booklet, "An Introduction to Investing in Securities," explains clearly and briefly just what buying securities (such as shares of stock) entails. It outlines how a company issues securities to the public and stresses the entitlement and need of investors to obtain information about companies in which they invest.

Recently the Ontario Securities Commission added Chinese, Greek and Italian versions of the booklet to those in English and French. The booklets are available from the Ontario Securities Commission, Suite 1800, Box 55, 20 Queen St. West, Toronto, ON M5H 3S8. Telephone (416) 597-0681.

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small talk

Alice Los

Working unto the Lord

One Labour Day many years ago I put in long hours of hard work to give birth to one of our children. It was a labour of love which I was to recall often on the first Monday of subsequent Septembers, the more so since it had been 90 degrees on the old Fahrenheit scale and the hospital's otherwise fine care did not include air conditioning.

Of course, this is not the kind of toil which comes to mind when the Labour Day parade goes by. The focus of Labour Day is on what people do for a living. It's on how this work affects their lives and their well-being. Much emphasis is also placed on how much it pays and on how a job cuts in on an individual's leisure time.

Sadly, the joy of an honest day's labour and the satisfaction over a job well done, as well as the blessing which can be found in a regular routine, are not widely considered. Naturally, daily labour is a very significant aspect of life. It provides men and women with earning power, it gives them the all-important sense of dignity and it often allows for creative expression.

Work shouldn't determine worth

The collective workforce of each nation is an essential cog in the wheel that makes the world go 'round, and each personal contribution has its value. Therefore, people who are unemployed tend to feel left out, useless even, and they need our sympathy. Older people who have retired from their regular jobs may have similar emotions to cope with, at least initially. They may find other meaningful things to do but still struggle with a sense of redundance. Perhaps that's also why, in retrospect, their past work takes on a somewhat exaggerated glow of importance. And it's probably why I like to remember — out loud and in the presence of my grandchildren — how well I used to help my mother around the house, even before I left for school in the morning.

The Bible has much to say about labour. Genesis 3 clearly explains how work came to be the burden it sometimes is. (Incidentally, that same chapter has also something to say about childbearing.) Psalm 127 helps us to put our work in perspective. It should be daily mandatory reading for all workaholics as well as for those who are otherwise overwhelmed by their jobs.

People who worry about the cost of living do well to read Matthew 26:25-34 — often; while those who are lazy find a dire warning in 2 Thess. 3:10 where we are told that those who don't want to work should not expect to eat either.

Work is exciting

Some work is tedious, yet it must be done. Unpleasant labour relations, too, can stand in the way of satisfaction at the end of the day. In both cases the words of Col. 3:23-24 will help. In fact it's good for all of us to remember them: "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

Does that not make all work exciting? It also tells us that, in principle, our daily work has been redeemed. Therefore, each job takes on a rich dimension of eternal value. Therefore, each job takes on a rich dimension of eternal value. Think of it! Doing a stack of dishes, building a house, plowing a field "as working for the Lord" will be rewarded on the new earth! It makes the fattest paycheque cheap by comparison. For the believer, it also makes all work utterly meaningful — which is a good thing to ponder after all the rhetoric of Labour Day.

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont.

Video review

Marian Van Til

Green Card

Stars Gerard Depardieu, Andie MacDowell
Produced, written and directed by Peter Weir

George Faure is a French composer who has come to New York City looking for new musical opportunities. Bronte — yes, named after the novelist Bronte sisters by her father, hoping she would become a writer — is a near-fanatical horticulturalist.

Each has a problem. George's visa has expired and he's now in the U.S. illegally. He can't get a "green card" which would allow him to live and work in the country — unless of course he were to marry an American. Bronte needs a place (a BIG place) to grow, tend and conduct research on her plants.

She has found such a place, a beautiful penthouse apartment complete with huge, attached greenhouse. But the building owners are very picky about renting to just anyone, and they require that she be married in order to get the apartment.

It's not hard to see where this story line is going. Bronte and George will marry for convenience; he will get his green card; she will get her apartment and they will live happily ever after — apart.

The match game

But neither one counts on the tenacity of U.S. Immigration and its crackdown on illegal aliens. Immigration officials come snooping, just to make sure that Bronte and George haven't struck up a marriage of convenience. So to learn at least *something* about each other in order to prepare for an immigration interview which they both must attend, George will have to move in for the weekend (sleeping on the couch, of course).

Bronte is not impressed with George. He's a big oaf of a man, a free spirit full of Gallic charm which doesn't sway her. And he holds what she considers to be reactionary views about society and politics. She is buttoned-down, even repressed in comparison. She's a vegetarian environmentalist who, with her matching vegetarian environmentalist boyfriend and her horticulturalist's knowledge, puts her concern for ecology into action. Despite all their differences, by the end of the movie George and Bronte realize they've fallen in love.

This film is virtually a one-man effort: Australian Peter Weir wrote, produced and directed it. It's a likeable film in some ways, but also irritating.

Foremost in the minds of Christian viewers will be determining what Weir is saying about marriage. Is he implying that marriage can be taken so lightly that it's no problem when a couple who don't know each other marry for pragmatic reasons?

Can't do without love

While that may at first appear to be true, much of the rest of the film shows that, if anything, Weir's message is the opposite. Various characters comment on the need for love and stability in marriage. And the complications with which Bronte and George are confronted make them see that marriage must be and is far more than a pragmatic arrangement. In a sense, they experience what many in the arranged marriages of the past found: that love and heart commitment may come after the legal fact, but that those are indeed necessary ingredients.

Green Card's main weakness is Andie MacDowell, who plays Bronte. MacDowell's acting skills are lightweight, especially when seen next to the nuanced performance of Depardieu, currently France's top actor. That discrepancy in acting ability will be a constant irritant to some viewers.

A major strength of this film is that this is a love story which develops wholly apart from having sex — an uncommon circumstance in contemporary film and television.

Another strength is *Green Card's* unsentimental ending. A plot like this could degenerate into pure slop in the hands of the wrong storyteller. But Weir avoids that course. His ending is hopeful without being predictable.

Cinema/Media

Alberta minister praises success of Les Miserables

CALGARY (Canadian Scene) — According to Doug Main, Alberta's Minister of Culture and Multiculturalism, the three-week appearance of the hit musical drama *Les Miserables* in Calgary had a sizeable impact on the city's economy. *Les Miserables* generated more than $5 million. Total attendance was 80,568, with 34 per cent being visitors from out of town, each of whom spent an average of $55 in addition to buying a ticket for the show. Main said, "This kind of revenue shows that the arts benefit business: from hotels, restaurants and drycleaning to shopping centres."

Zondervan gives women equal opportunities

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (EP) — Zondervan, an international Christian communications company, has won the Women in the Workplace Award, presented by the Women's Resource Center (WRC) of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The award honours businesses which have made contributions to the successes of women in the workplace.

Criteria include having women serve on the company's board, investigating day care services, establishing sexual harassment policies and practices, providing progressive benefit packages, having women in management positions, exploring job sharing practices, offering staff development, and providing employee training for promotion. One point singled out by WRC was the recent promotion of Anne L. Sherman to corporate vice-president and chief financial officer.

Ontario minister's constituency office doubles as an art gallery

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — Elected politicians' constituency offices are usually utilitarian in appearance and not noted for their decor. Not so the office of Rosario Marchese, Ontario Minister of Culture and Communications, who is MPP for the Toronto riding of Fort York. The walls of his storefront office on Dundas Street West are covered with the work of local artists. From mid-December to mid-March, photographs by Rick Simon shared space with art by students and graduates of the famous Central Technical School Art Centre. The latest exhibit features works by painters Lee L'Clerc and Jerry and Leider Engler.

Monitor service offers a complete guide to ethnic print media

TORONTO (Canadian Scene) — In recent years, such has been the growth of ethnic media in Canada that no single complete list has been available to the public. Now, what its compilers claim is a comprehensive list of print media has been produced.

The Canadian Ethnic Press Guide, published by Ethnomedia Monitor Services is an annotated list of more than 400 ethnic publications currently being published in Canada. It lists media in all languages directed to ethno-cultural communities, including those in English and French.

The 200-page *The Canadian Ethnic Press Guide* took two years to compile. It contains what its publisher claims to be up-to-date names of publishers, editors, addresses, fax and telephone numbers as well as data on circulation, distribution and advertising rates. It will be updated regularly.

Andrew Machalski, president of Ethnomedia, says his company is the only firm in Canada to provide a press clipping service and media analysis of Canada's multilingual publications. Copies of *The Canadian Ethnic Press Guide* may be obtained from Ethnomedia Monitor Services, P.O. Box 704, Station "K," Toronto, ON M4P 2H2. Telephone (416) 489-3148. Price is $85.00 including shipping and taxes.

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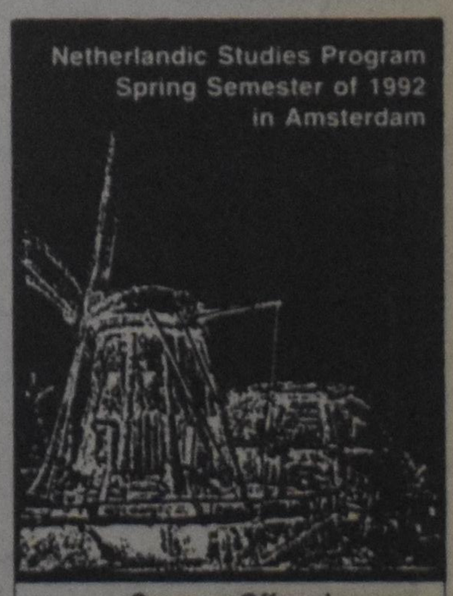

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Issue/Advice

Give us this day our daily meat?

John H. Kok

Maybe you know someone, as I do, who prefers not to eat meat. And certainly not meat that still looks like what it is — or, more properly, was. In addition to an occasional burger, an actual boneless ham may grace her table once a year, and fish is fine if it's squared to fit a bun, but de-boning (dismembering) three whole chickens for the local soup-supper is as out of the question as serving a cow's tongue with Sunday's potatoes and vegetables. Not that she's a vegetarian or hates animals (we have two cats and a dog). She just doesn't like the idea of eating the flesh of animals.

Now we both agree that eating meat is not wrong. But does being "not wrong" make it right? Personally, I don't feel the need (actually, I think that it's impossible) to back up every particular decision as to what's right and what's wrong with a particular chapter and verse. But when it comes to eating meat, I can quite honestly say that if it's good enough for Peter (who was told by God, "Kill and eat") and good enough for Paul (who warned only some could be offended if the meat we ate had been first offered to idols), it's good enough for me. Mary might not enjoy eating it, or even preparing it, but to do so is certainly no sin.

Some may well disagree. Possibly for two very different reasons.

Adam and Eve were vegetarians

There are Christians who eat no meat because that's the way God meant it to be in the beginning. After all, weren't Adam and Eve originally given only every seed-bearing plant and every tree that has fruit with seed in it "for meat" (King James Version), that is, "for food" (New International Version)? Wasn't the first animal killed, and then only for its skin, as a result of humankind's fall into sin? And even though God told Noah he could also eat the blood-let flesh of animals, don't Isaiah and Hosea look forward with eager anticipation to the time when man and beast will no longer be at each other's jugular veins?

Undoubtedly. That is what we read there. But to conclude on this basis that Christians disobey God's will when they eat meat deserves as much credence, it seems to me, as the suggestion that the restoration that redemption brings will sooner or later return us, not to New Jersey, but to the original garden-state: vegetarians blissfully wandering about a fruit-laden orchard (wearing what you possibly had for breakfast today: nut'n honey). The Bible may begin that way, but don't forget, it ends with a city clothed in the cleansed riches of the nations.

Wrong question

But not every Christian who doesn't eat meat is a vegetarian. Some abstain because they feel that the animals brought to today's market are tainted because they are being sacrificed to the idol called "the consumer is king": if it tastes good (and you can afford it), eat it! The bone these Christians have to pick with the present market actually centres around the fact that of the grain used in the United States and Canada (about five pounds per day per person), three-fourths is converted into livestock products (at a ratio of about six parts grain to one part animal protein), while many countries in the world have to "make do" with the minimal requirements for survival (about a pound of grain per day). They conclude that if for every quarter-pounder eaten per day, one and a half people are being deprived of a minimal diet, then to ask "Where's the beef?" is obviously the wrong question.

This second reason for not eating meat displays a good deal more global awareness and responsibility than those who abstain only to keep their cholesterol at a minimum. But what would happen if Christians abstained from everything that was tainted by the idols of our time? Not only dance, movies, television and card games would have to go. When it comes right down to it, what hasn't been tainted by the world? But besides that, what good does it do to withdraw, to retreat, to abstain? Is your not buying a pound of pork chops or ground beef this week going to make any difference in the world?

A little salt goes a long way

No, I don't think it's wrong to eat meat. As a matter of fact, I had some tonight with dinner. But I must admit that it's not being wrong doesn't make it all right, either. What about world hunger? People are starving in the world, while North Americans eat more than is good for them. Meat is affordable for most of us because we have here more grain than we, in the course of a day, know what to do with.

But then again, it seems we're losing a bushel of topsoil for every bushel of grain we harvest. (Maybe that's why continents that have been farmed for centuries can't match our productivity.) But, on the other hand, if we continue to eat less meat, what's that going to do to the farm economy and, by implication, to the economic well-being of the nation and its deficit?

These questions are obviously far more weighty than whether or not you or I like the look, the smell and/or the taste of meat.

Christians are called to make a difference in this world, which includes a world of increasingly pressing present problems related to keeping the earth (which we know belongs to God). That is to say, we know better than to say, "I have my beliefs; you have yours. You don't rock my boat; I won't rock yours." A light should be let to shine, and not just parochially. But then, you know as well as I do when it comes to meat, a little salt goes a long way.

John Kok is associate professor of philosophy at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa.

Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P & M:

While visiting a friend I came across your column in the C.C. and thought I'd address this question to you.

My husband and I are of moderate means. We are both committed Christians and have two children, ages 5 and 3. Now that our eldest is ready for kindergarten we've been considering the idea of Christian versus public education. We are not Christian Reformed ourselves but we live close to a Christian school which was started by the local Christian Reformed community.

Financially we can (with some sacrifice) afford the tuition. Our dilemma is: would this be worth it? What are the pros and cons to this kind of schooling as far as resources, moral impact, etc., are concerned?

Please share your opinions about this to help us come to a decision. We're planning to visit the school and talk to the principal. What should we be looking for to assure us that our child will be in good hands?

Dear Christian Parent:

A number of years ago Sam Da Silva, one of our panelists, found himself in precisely the same situation. When he and his wife visited the local Christian school he was struck by the posters on the walls which celebrated Christ's Lordship and the fact that this is God's world. He remembers thinking to himself: I want my kids to learn in an environment that assumes our world belongs to God. Their visit with the principal, a person of gentle spirit and strong Christian conviction, impressed them as well.

When you visit your local Christian school, meet both the principal and the kindergarten teacher and look for two things: love for the Lord and love for the children in their care. Don't be afraid to ask them whatever it is that you need to know to satisfy your curiosity and settle your fears. Get a copy of the school's constitution. Find out how the school is regulated and whether government standards are being met. Look for an attitude of tolerance and appreciation for Christians of various backgrounds. Your child will spend many hours at school. Get a feel for the place by touring the facility, peeking into various classrooms and checking out the playground. If your child has special needs, ask what kind of help and resources the school is able to provide.

Do you have any friends who send their children to this particular Christian school? If so, invite them for a conversation about your dilemma. Parents or students are in the best position to give you their honest impressions and you should find a way to speak with several of them.

When comparing two school systems, you especially want to compare their philosophies of education. There is no such thing as neutral education. Each school and every teacher approaches life with a particular view of God, of humanity, of what is morally acceptable. Your child will spend many hours under the influence of other adults and in the company of other children. As committed Christians, you are looking for a teaching staff and a student body that complement your Christian home and your Christ-centred faith and values.

While each member of our advisory panel has had a very positive experience with Christian education we are still aware of its shortcomings and limitations. In fact, we personally know some parents and students who, for various reasons, have been disappointed enough to transfer to other school systems. The truth is that Christian schools are not perfect. Yet despite their imperfections, the way things are handled and resolved usually shows a lot of grace and love. To us that has always counted for a lot, especially when our own children have run into academic and social difficulties along the way.

Our rationale for supporting Christian education is well expressed in the *Contemporary Testimony* which the Christian Reformed Church approved in 1986:

In education we seek to acknowledge the Lord by promoting schools and teaching in which the light of his word shines in all learning, where students, of whatever ability, are treated as persons who bear God's image and have a place in his plan (Paragraph 50).

To us, this view of education makes it all worthwhile. We sincerely hope that you will come to a similar conclusion as you prayerfully consider what is best for your child.

Dear Readers:

During the summer we have not received as many letters as usual. That's understandable. All of us have enjoyed vacations, outdoor activities, etc. Now that September is here, please write us so that this column can continue to deal with some of the things that affect the lives of C.C. subscribers and readers. Don't think that you may only write when you have a major problem and no one with whom you can discuss it. And don't think that only others should write. All of us find ourselves intrigued, puzzled or plagued by issues large and small. A letter from you, whether it's a quick sentence or a lengthier page, can help us learn from each other. So write to the address below. As you know, confidentiality is assured.

Write to: P & M
c/o Calvinist Contact
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brower-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

Classified

Classified rates

GST Inclusive

Births..... $35.00
Marriages & Engagements. $40.00
Anniversaries..... $45.00
2-column anniversaries.... $90.00
Obituaries..... $45.00
Notes of thanks..... $35.00
Birthdays..... $35.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $25.00. Letter under file number, $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.) **Note:** All rates shown above are GST inclusive.

ATTENTION!

a) *Calvinist Contact* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format, *unless you instruct us otherwise.*

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax are *not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Calvinist Contact* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. *Calvinist Contact* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $13.50 per column inch (GST inclusive).

NEWLYWEDS

Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in *Calvinist Contact* will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only $20.00 (GST inclusive)! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose $20.00 and the couple's future address.

Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (416) 682-8311
Fax: (416) 682-8313

Birth

Keen:
We, John and Agnes, are happy to announce the birth of our first grandchild,

ANTHONY JOHN

born Aug. 26, 1991. The happy parents are Clarence and Debbie Keen. Anthony is the seventh grandchild for Simon and Alice Langeraap. Children are a heritage of the Lord and we are thankful to God who made all things well.
Home address: R.R. #5, Dunnville, ON N1A 2W4

For Rent

For rent in **Winterhaven, Florida,** one-bedroom **mobile home** in adult park, across the lake from Cypress Gardens. The rates are $550 a month, pre-Christmas rates, $450 a month. Available from Oct. 1 - Dec. 15, Jan. 2 - Feb. 15 and Mar. 1 - Apr. 15. Please call 1 (705) 526-3395.

Anniversaries

1946 September 17 1991
With joy and thankfulness to God, we rejoice with our dear parents and grandparents,

RALPH and FRANCES DEBOER
(nee Hoiting)

on the occasion of their 45th wedding anniversary.
May God continue to bless and keep them.
With love and congratulations from:
John & Effie VanderKolk — Caistor Centre, Ont.
Marsha, Barry
William & Geraldine DeBoer — Caledonia, Ont.
David, Paul, Heather, Michelle
Harry & Anita DeBoer — Hagersville, Ont.
Kevin, Daryl, Mark, Leanne
Tom & Rita VanHardeveld — Kincardine, Ont.
Eric, Matthew, Sarah, Philip
Ben & Helen DeBoer — Ancaster, Ont.
Reuben, Keri-Ann
John & Tena Wikkerink — Beamsville, Ont.
Daniel, Alisha, Larissa, Brittany
Ralph & Darlene DeBoer — Caledonia, Ont.
Jesse, Joseph
Family and friends are invited to an open house reception on Saturday, Sept. 21, 1991, at the York Chr. Ref. Church at 7:30 p.m.
Home address: R.R. #3, Hagersville, ON N0A 1H0

Edmonton, Alta. Calgary, Alta.
1951 September 26 1991
"Jesus...said unto him, '...Today I must abide at thy house.' Jesus said unto him, 'This day is salvation come to this house.'" (Luke 19:5c, 9a).

Hooray, hooray,
here comes the day
of 40 years together.

Our parents can say,
there's been much work and play
in 40 years together.

Lots of bread on the tray
and lawn into hay
after 40 years together.

We continue to pray
for God's blessing today,
and many more years together!

SAM and WIETSKE DE WALLE
(nee ten Cate)

With love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:
Ed & Sarah de Walle — Terrace, B.C.
Leah, Fraser, Alana, Jocelyn
Frank & Anne de Walle — Lethbridge, Alta.
Samuel, Joanna, Alyson
Ary & Joanna Vreeken — Calgary, Alta.
Peter
There will be an open house at Emmanuel Chr. Ref. Church, Calgary, Alta., September 28, 1991, from 2 - 4 p.m.
Home address: 5308 Thorndale Rd., N.W., Calgary, AB T2K 3E2

1956 1991
With joy and thanksgiving to God we wish to announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

HENK and NELL HORNSVELD
(nee Vanderleek)

on September 21, 1991.
We thank Mom and Dad for their care and love. We pray that God will continue to bless you richly.
With love from:
Don — Hamilton, Ont.
Gord & Glenda — Mount Hope, Ont.
Heather, Nadia, Adalia, Esther, Sophie, Nicolaas
Paul — Hamilton, Ont.
Marianne & Rick Dam — Hamilton, Ont.
Justin
Home address: 1693 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, ON L9B 1P1

Anniversaries

1941 September 19 1991
With joy and thanksgiving the children, grandchildren and great-granddaughter of

THEUNIS and HELENA DRAGSTRA
(nee deRuyter)

announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents.
We pray that God will continue to keep them in his care.
Congratulations Mom and Dad, Grandma and Grandpa, and Great-Grandma and Great-Grandpa.
Rena & Bill Kolkman — Londesborough, Ont.
Robert & Lissa (Leticia), Stephen
John Dragstra — Goderich, Ont.
Martha & Bill Herriot — Victoria, B.C.
Katrina, John, Tanis, James

An open house honouring this occasion will be held in Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, Goderich, Ont., from 2 - 4 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 21, 1991. Best wishes only.
Home address: R.R. #2, Goderich, ON N7A 3X8

1946 September 4 1991
With thanks to God we announce the 45th wedding anniversary of:

SIETSE and JO VANDER BOOM
(nee Kooistra)

We thank you for your love and care, and pray that God will continue to sustain you.
Congratulations Dad and Mom, Opa and Oma, from:
Theo & Rens Vander Boom
Teresa, Mark, David, Karen
Chris & Jim Vanderkooy
Sheldon, Michelle, Trish, Sarah
Margaret & Jack Vanderkooy
Steven, Tim, Rachel, Leisha
We celebrated this joyous event by spending a week together at a cottage. Thank you, Dad and Mom, for your generous gift.
Home address: 1271 Walden Circle, Apt. #202, Mississauga, ON L5J 4R4

Personal

AWARE (As We Are), a gay and lesbian support group for those within or with roots in the Chr. Ref. denomination, is meeting monthly in London, Ont. If interested, direct inquiries in confidence to: Aware, London, P.O. Box 1053, Station B, London, ON N6A 5K2

For Rent

Apartment for rent: Bright, roomy one-bedroom apartment in Burlington, Ont. (whole upper floor). Walking distance to GO-train. Private entrance and parking, all utilities provided: heat, air, hydro, cable. Non-smoker. $600/mo. Occupy by October 1. Call John or Carol: (416) 639-7201.

Home for rent in **Grimsby** area. Three-bedroom bungalow, immaculate condition, finished basement. Country living, one-acre lot, three miles from QEW. Appliances included, $800 per month plus utilities. No pets; non-smoking. References required. Call: (416) 957-3013.

Anniversaries

1951 September 19 1991
"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1).
With these words our parents,

ANDREW and JENNIE MIEDEMA
(nee Bakker)

were wed, and their trust in the Lord's providence has not wavered over the past 40 years.
Mom and Dad, we pray that the Lord will give you many more years of health and happiness, together, and with us.
Love from:
Thelma & Ron Rooke — London
Michael & Diana Miedema — St. Thomas
Matthew, Danielle, Patrick
Bernie & Marsha Miedema — Exeter
Meaghan, Tyler, Nikki
Home address: 75 Paul St., St. Thomas, ON N5R 5G6

Help Wanted

Director of Support Counselling Program

Knowledgeable about community resources. Experienced supervisor. Good communication and decision making skills. Report writing. Must appreciate vision of project. Send resume by September 13, 1991, to: Executive Director, Bethlehem Housing Project Niagara, 58 Welland Ave., St. Catharines, ON L2R 2M5

Help Wanted

Social service work — Mutual Support Systems, a network of rural group homes in the Niagara Peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, invites applications for the position of **Child Care Worker.** The responsibilities of this live-in position include involvement in the educational programming of the residents, scheduling daily routines, as well as planning special events, all in a family setting. In-service training provides an excellent opportunity for personal growth and skill development at role modelling positive relationships and facilitating the resident's successes. Position includes salary and benefits package. Position commences in September. Please submit resume to Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. Telephone: (416) 899-2311.

For Sale

Evangelistic Materials in Arabic

Also, in English,
The Bible and Islam
$4.95 Canada / $3.95 U.S.
and a folder of essays on Understanding the Middle East ($1.50)
Write:
The Back to God Hour
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

The faith becomes fun

I prefer to preach about Jesus. That may sound funny. The last few years I preach less about the Old Testament and less about Paul. I got a lot of support from the traffic rules of the faith as given by the Apostle Paul. I needed the dogmas of Paul to distinguish 'black' from 'white.' Once you know God's traffic rules, you experience a lot of freedom of action. It's a bit like riding a bike. At first you clamp your hands around the steering wheel. Shaking like a reed, you look to the left and right and at others with great intensity. But at a certain point you apply the traffic rules automatically and then you bike for fun. You gain a sense of liberation in this business called sanctification. The things you first *had* to do you now do spontaneously. You discover that the faith is fun.... That's what happened to me. (Translated from an interview with Arnold Van Heusden in *Centraal Weekblad)*

Help Wanted

Brampton Second Christian Reformed Church

requires a

YOUTH PASTOR

as part of its ministry. The dynamic, youth-oriented person must be able to develop programs to challenge our youth to active participation in the Christian life.

A possible secondary involvement will be Evangelism or Education. We are expanding our educational facilities and developing an alternative second morning service to better meet the needs of our congregation and our community.

We are excited about your participation in realizing our vision for youth ministry.

Education, training and experience in youth ministry are desirable.

Excellent employment and housing benefits will be provided. More information and a church profile are available upon request. Resumes can be sent to: the **Search Committee, c/o J. Grootenboer, (416) 450-6796, 9 Willis Dr., Brampton, ON L6W 1A8.**

Classified/Events

Help Wanted

Holland Christian Homes Inc.

7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., R.R.10, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2
Telephone: (416) 459-3333

Holland Christian Homes is seeking a

Promotions Director/Fund Raiser

(title yet to be determined) for the following purposes:

1. Solicit donations from the community, corporations, local businesses, etc.
2. Pursue grants, subsidies and donations at the municipal provincial and federal levels of government.
3. Work in acquiring Wills and Bequests from tenants and residents.
4. Write reports for government submissions.
5. Work toward retiring all debt for the Nursing Home.

Please apply to:

John Kalverda, Executive Director,
Holland Christian Homes, Inc.
7900 McLaughlin Road South
Brampton, ON L6V 3N2
Phone 416-459-3333 or Fax 416-459-8667

Help Wanted

Christian Reformed World Missions

DIRECTOR OF WORLD MISSIONS--CANADA

Christian Reformed World Missions is accepting applications for Director of World Missions--Canada. The Director will give leadership in raising awareness of and support for World Missions in the Christian Reformed churches in Canada. The Director will also supervise the general administration of Christian Reformed World Missions--Canada. A position description is available upon request.

Contact:
Dr. Peter Borgdorff
c/o World Missions--Canada
3475 Mainway
P.O. Box 5070
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8
(416) 336-2920

Events

CAMP SHALOM'S ANNUAL FALL FAIR

Theme: *Canada: Our Country*

Saturday, September 21, 1991
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Camp Shalom
R.R. #4
Cambridge, Ontario

Events

Eighth Annual Senior Citizen's Day at Redeemer College

Thursday, October 31, 1991
Beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Dr. Gene Haas, Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology at Redeemer College, will address you in the morning. His topic will be based on I Corinthians 9 and is titled: "Slaves of Christ".
Redeemer College Students will entertain you in the afternoon with mime and music.

Lunch: $7.50 per person
Please register now,
Phone (416) 648-2131

Redeemer College — *A Christian University College*
Ancaster, Ontario L9G 3N6 (416) 648-2131

Real Estate

ADA REALTY LTD.

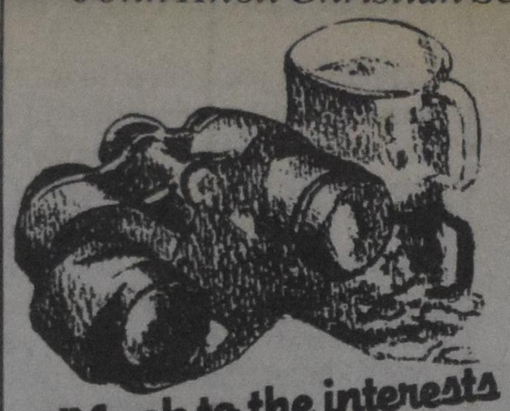
6012 Ada Blvd.
Edmonton, AB
T5W 4N9
(403) 471-1814
Sid Vandermeulen

Contact us first when you think of moving to Edmonton and district.
Het vertrouwde adres.

Events

The All Ontario Diaconal Conference invites you to the 32nd Annual Meeting

Saturday, October 19: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
John Knox Christian School - Brampton



- **15 workshops**
- **16 seminars**
- **fellowship**

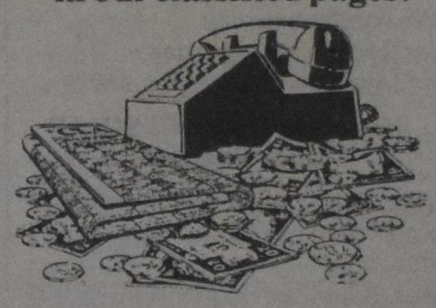
Cost: $25
(for pre-registration)

This is open to all people interested in diaconal ministry. For information call AODC 1-416-646-4511.

Teacher

EDMONTON, Alta.: Edmonton Christian High School. If interested in a .67 **Social Studies** and **Humanities** teaching position, effective November, you are invited to send your resume and professional documentation to: S. Williams, Principal, Edmonton Chr. High School, 14304 - 109 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5N 1H6

Don't rob yourself of more business — advertise in our classified pages!



Want to rent a car while in Holland?

Ltd AutoRent

Jan Kalma has the key to all forms of car rentals.

Will deliver car to Amsterdam airport if desired.

jan kalma

De Meer 24, 9201 EZ Drachten
The Netherlands — Tel. (31) 5120-15199
Fax (31) 5120-32324

COMMITTEE OF CONCERNED MEMBERS of the Christian Reformed Church THIRD ALL-ONTARIO CONFERENCE

"REFORMATION THROUGH DISCIPLINE"

September 20 & 21, 1991

Maranatha
Christian Reformed Church
Woodstock, Ontario

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1991

7:30 - 8:15 p.m. Registration and Coffee
8:15 p.m. Conference Opening
-The Conference Committee-
8:30 p.m. Simon Beldman presiding
Speaker:
Rev. Joel VanderKooi
Address: *"Reformation Through Self Discipline"*

Coffee Social following

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1991

8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Registration and Coffee
9:15 - 9:30 a.m. Opening Devotions:
Rev. Jerry VanDyke
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Rev. VanDyke presiding
Speaker: Rev. Ray Lanning
Address: *"Reformation Through Mutual Discipline"*
10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Coffee
11:00 - 12:00 p.m. Sectional Workshops
12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch
1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Discussion with questions and answers including all speakers
2:30 - 3:00 p.m. Coffee
3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Mark Zylstra presiding
Speaker: Rev. Paul Murphy
Address: *"Reformation Through Church Discipline"*
4:00 p.m. Closing - Mark Zylstra

REGISTRATION FORM

CONCERNED MEMBERS THIRD ALL-ONTARIO CONFERENCE

Pre-registration is encouraged.
If, however, you are unable to register on or before September 7, 1991, do feel free to register at the Conference.

Name: .....
Address: .....
City: .....
Prov./State: .....
Code: .....
Phone: .....

COST:

Early Registration	Late Registration
$25.00 per person	**$27.00** per person
$40.00 per couple	**$42.00** per couple

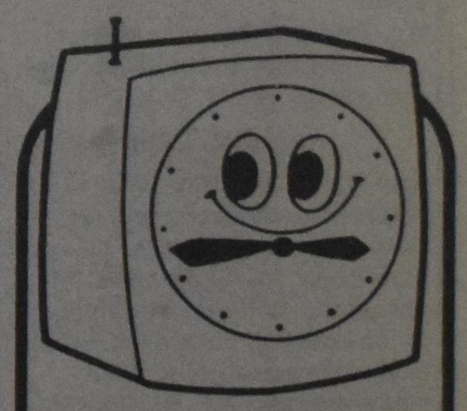
Student Registration
$15.00

Total Enclosed: $ .....

Please make your cheque or money order payable to: **CCMCRC.**

For registration or more information write:

Mr. Mark Zylstra
P.O. Box 2014, Station B
St. Catharines, ON
L2M 6P5



WHEN IT'S TIME FOR RESULTS... CALL THE CLASSIFIEDS!

Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.
4-261 Martindale Rd.,
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (416) 682-8311
Fax: (416) 682-8313

Events

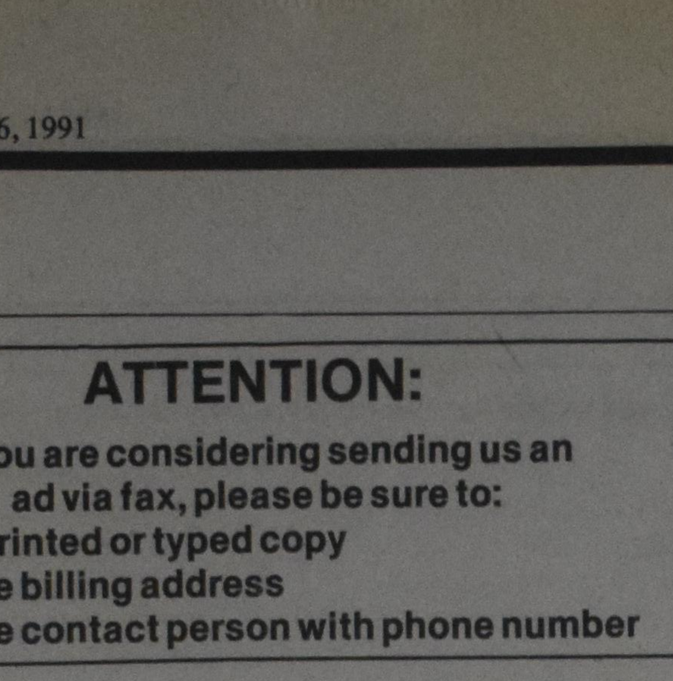
ATTENTION:

If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:

1. send printed or typed copy
2. include billing address
3. include contact person with phone number

Weekly puzzle

by Louis Santrey



ACROSS
1 Carpenter at work
6 Beginning with
10 Gr. cheese
14 Plato shopped here
15 Jot
16 And others: abbr.
17 Thief
18 Ms Lane
19 Take charge
20 Sargent's forte
21 Side dish
24 Lubricated
26 Vex
27 Kind of bike
29 Calmed
34 Church parts
35 Playground staple
36 Copy
37 Burma neighbor
38 Goatees grow here
39 Hook's sidekick
40 Old Fr. coin
41 Silly soul
42 Courage
43 Lizard and croc
45 Read
46 Actor Holbrook
47 Tough question
48 Fountain treat
53 Opening
56 Ancient land
57 Legal bargain
58 Ryan or Papas
60 "Eternal City"
61 Agra garb
62 Father of sci-fi
63 Lambs' parents
64 Knotted
65 A Ford

DOWN
1 Epic account
2 Culture medium
3 Oriental order
4 Previous to
5 Fictional gentleman thief
6 Was in pain
7 Shortly
8 Of the ear
9 Shapes
10 Rabbit hunter
11 Needle case
12 Bedtime piece
13 Pub orders
22 Sleep-study abbr.
23 Ornamental fastener
25 Nones follower
27 Old Ger. coin
28 Swiftly
29 Kind of cheese
30 Prospector's place
31 Diner order
32 Buttoned blades
33 Inventor of farm machines
35 Clodhopper
38 Breakdown
39 Regal address
41 — Carlo Menotti
42 Gala
44 River to the North Sea
45 Maui meal
47 Clear
48 Unclothed
49 Lined up
50 Specify
51 Czech or Pole
52 "— Goriot"
54 Wife of Henry VIII
55 Pare
59 — herring

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Last week's puzzle

W	E	L	K		S	C	O	W	S		C	A	R	D
A	D	E	N		U	R	I	A	H		A	L	O	E
H	I	F	I		C	E	L	L	O		N	A	M	E
L	E	T	T	U	C	E		T	U	R	N	I	P	S
			T	R	O	D			T	A	O			
A	C	L	E	A	R		G	R	I	N	N	I	N	G
P	E	A	R	L		G	R	A	N	T		N	O	R
T	A	M	S		F	L	A	G	G		A	L	V	A
E	S	P		R	O	U	S	E		F	L	E	E	T
R	E	S	T	O	R	E	S		K	E	T	T	L	E
			A	T	A			A	N	D	I			
C	A	B	B	A	G	E		M	U	S	T	A	R	D
H	E	E	L		E	L	M	E	R		U	S	E	D
U	R	G	E		R	E	B	E	L		D	I	V	A
M	O	S	T		S	E	A	R	S		E	A	S	Y

Calendar of Events

Aug. 28-Sept. 11 "Vrouwen van Oranje," important women of the House of Orange from 1506 to 1991 dramatically displayed: **Aug. 28:** 7:30 p.m., Maranatha CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.; **Aug. 30:** 2 p.m., CRC, **Smithville,** Ont.; **Aug. 31:** 7 p.m., Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.; **Sept. 3:** 7:30 p.m., Holland Chr. Homes, **Brampton,** Ont.; **Sept. 4:** 7:30 p.m., Chr. School Gym, **Jarvis,** Ont.; **Sept. 5:** 7:30 p.m., Mount Hamilton CRC, **Hamilton,** Ont.; **Sept. 6:** 7:30 p.m., Knox Chr. School Gym, **Bowmanville,** Ont.; **Sept. 7:** 2 p.m., CRC, **Willowdale,** Ont.; **Sept. 9:** 7:30 p.m., Chr. School Gym, **Woodstock,** Ont.; **Sept. 10:** 8 p.m., Lambton Chr. High School, **Sarnia,** Ont.; **Sept. 11:** 8 p.m., New Street CRC, **Burlington,** Ont. For info. call Jan De Vries at (416) 8266 or Steve Stelpstra at (416) 632-1400.

Sept. 7-21 Open house for "Because we remember, the campaign for Shalom Manor," 12 Bartlett Ave., **Grimsby,** Ont. Each Saturday (Sept. 7, 14, 21) at 2 p.m. there will be an explanation of building plans, tours and coffee. For info. call (416) 945-7009.

Sept. 10 RCBPO General Membership meeting and Directors' quarterly meeting at the Astoria Restaurant, **Cambridge,** Ont.

Sept. 11 RCBPO meetings with labour lawyer Fred Heerema speaking on reform of Ontario's labour legislation. **7 a.m.:** Beacon Motor Hotel, **Jordan,** Ont.; **12 noon:** Krebs Rest., **Cambridge,** Ont.; **7:30 p.m.:** Public Library, **Chatham,** Ont.

Sept. 12 RCBPO meetings with labour lawyer Fred Heerema speaking on reform of Ontario's labour legislation. **7 a.m.:** breakfast meeting in **Sarnia,** Ont.; **12 noon:** Seven Dwarfs Restaurant, **London,** Ont.; 7:30 p.m.: Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont.

Sept. 14 "Bond van Wapenbroeders" will have a Canada Day in **Kitchener,** Ont. A delegation from Holland will be present. For info. call Chris (648-5155) or Bert (522-2376).

Sept. 19 CFFO Provincial Board meets at Muddy Duck Restaurant, 360 Steeles Ave., **Milton,** Ont. (south of Hwy. 401, just east of Hwy. 25). For info. call (519) 837-1620.

Sept. 20-21 Third All-Ontario Conference of the Committee of Concerned Members of the CRC. At Maranatha CRC, **Woodstock,** Ont. Speakers: Revs. J. Vander Kooi, Ray Lanning and Paul Murphy. For info. call (416) 562-4276.

Sept. 20-22 Back to God Hour Rallies in B.C. **Sept. 20:** CRC, **Duncan,** at 7:30 p.m.; **Sept. 21:** First CRC, **Langley,** at 7:30 p.m.; **Sept. 22:** Central Heights Church, **Abbotsford,** at 2:30 p.m.; **Sept. 22:** CRC, **New Westminster,** at 7 p.m.

Sept. 21 The 1991 fall retreat for "Aware" at First CRC, Taunton Rd., **Toronto,** Ont. From 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. An opportunity to talk about many sides of lesbian/gay life inside or on the edge of the church. $5 charge for lunch and refreshments. For info. call Linda at (416) 694-3857.

Sept. 25-Oct. 10 CSS's Harry Houtman in Alberta.

Sept. 28 Organ concert by Jonathan Oldengarm, at 7:30 p.m., Benton Street Baptist Church, **Kitchener,** Ont. With guest artist Bruce Nuhn.

Sept. 28 Annual membership meeting of Redeemer College, at 2 p.m., R.C. Auditorium, **Ancaster,** Ont. Registration at 1:30 p.m.

Oct. 1-10 CSS's Adriana Pierik plans to be in B.C.'s Okanagan area, Kamloops, Salmon Arm, Vernon, Kelowna and Penticton.

Oct. 8 Organ concert by Jonathan Oldengarm, at 12:15 p.m., St. James Cathedral (Anglican), **Toronto,** Ont.

Oct. 9 Organ concert by Jonathan Oldengarm, at 12:15 p.m., St. Paul's Church (Anglican), **Toronto,** Ont.

Oct. 9 RCBPO (Hamilton/Wentworth Chapter) meets at 7:45 p.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. For info. call (416) 524-1203.

Oct. 9 - 17 Emmeloord Christian Male Choir with organist Klaas Jan Mulder in concert. All events start at 8 p.m. **Oct. 9:** Mountainview CRC, **Grimsby,** Ont.; **Oct. 10:** Dundas St. Centre United Church, **London,** Ont.; **Oct. 11:** Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont.; **Oct. 12:** St. Paul's Anglican Church, **Toronto,** Ont.; **Oct. 16:** St. George's Anglican Church, **Guelph,** Ont.; **Oct. 17:** Covenant CRC, **St. Catharines,** Ont.

Oct. 12-13 Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Ottawa Christian School, **Ottawa,** Ont. For info. call (613) 722-5836.

Oct. 19 "Netherlands Bazaar" from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. at the Thornhill Community Centre, **Thornhill,** Ont. Crafts, baking flowers, white-elephants, restaurant. Admission free. All proceeds to needy families of Dutch descent in Ontario.

Oct. 19 All-Ontario Diaconal Conference at John Knox Chr. School, **Brampton,** Ont. 16 workshops and 15 seminars. Call (416) 646-4511 for a registration form.

Oct. 26 Christian Rainbows meets at 10 a.m., CRC, **Ingersoll,** Ont. Theme: "Obtaining housing and support services for the psychiatrically disabled." To register call (416) 639-1075.

Oct. 31 Eighth Annual Senior Citizens' Day, 9:30 a.m., Redeemer College, **Ancaster,** Ont. Speaker: Dr. Gene Haas. Entertainment in the afternoon. Lunch is $7.50 p.p. Register now at (416) 648-2131.

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Classis meeting

Classis Niagara will meet in regular session on September 18, 9 a.m., at Bethany CRC, Fenwick, Ont.

Gerrit Veeneman, Stated Clerk

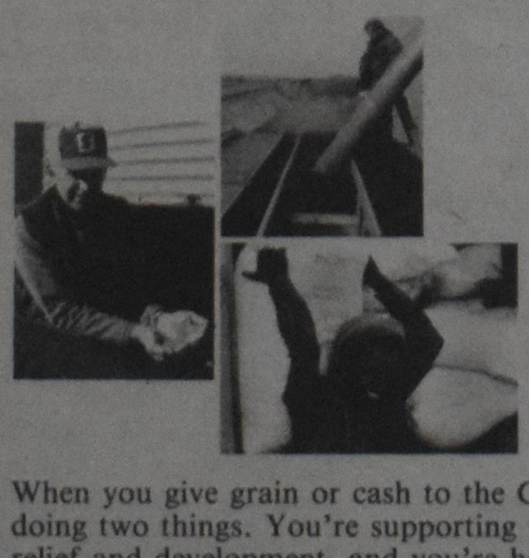
New officers

First CRC, Chatham, Ont.: Council chair: Peter Flikweert; telephone: (519) 354-4625. Clerk: Ron Middel; telephone: (519) 351-7151.

Note re: First CRC, Chatham, Ont.

This church would like agencies and other churches corresponding with it to take note that *one year ago* its address changed to: P.O. Box 1200, Chatham, ON N7M 5L8. From now on, all mail still coming to the old address (on Tweedsmuir Ave.) will be returned to sender by the post office.

FOOD/ GRAINS DRIVE 91-92



Urgent food needs exist in the world, particularly in Africa. The Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a consortium of 11 church partners committed to addressing these needs.

This year the Foodgrains Bank is seeking 20,000 mt in donated foodgrains.

When you give grain or cash to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, you're doing two things. You're supporting your own church's ministry of world relief and development, and you're helping to relieve hunger.

Consider sharing your resources. Make a deposit.

Designate your contribution to the account of

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee of Canada

Canadian Foodgrains Bank
A Christian Response to Hunger

For more information about how to make a grain or other donation, or to be involved in a grain drive, please phone or write:

CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK
Box 767
Winnipeg, MB R3C 2L4
Toll Free Number: (800) 665-0377
Local: (204) 944-1993
Fax: (204) 943-2597

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Family Christian Bookstore
750 Guelph Line
(Opposite the Burlington Mall)
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L7R 3N5
Phone: (416) 637-9151
Thurs. and Fri. till 9 p.m.

Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Popular culture

Analysis of pop culture stays partly in the dark

Dancing in the Dark: Youth, Popular Culture and the Electronic Media, by Anker (Project Editor), James D. Bratt, William D. Romanowski, John William Worst, Lambert Zuidervaart. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991. ISBN 0-8028-0530-2. Softcover, 296 pages, $18.95. Reviewed by Bill Van Dyk, Chatham, Ont.

Dancing in the Dark is a book with an ambitious mandate: "to make sense out of what [is] happening in North American society and culture." The six authors were selected from the academic disciplines of music, English, communications, philosophy, and history, and generously provided with 11 months of relative seclusion on the campus of Calvin College. The result is 300 pages of thorough, carefully-reasoned analysis and discussion of rock music, movies, television and music videos, and the economic substructure that keeps things ticking.

The writers provide a cogent overview of the corporate and social structures through which the media operate, and they do a reasonably good job of discussing the role the media plays in the lives of our youths. They commendably refrain from the kind of bombast and distorted sensationalism so frequently exploited by Christian commentators like Dan Veldman and Bob Larson, and they refuse to embrace simplistic or moralistic solutions to a complex problem. But in respect of their mandate, I don't think they've succeeded in "making sense of what is happening in North American Society and culture."

Generalizations

In spite of the sophistication of this book, its major shortcomings are common to many Christian commentators on the media: the tendency to make sweeping condemnations of popular music, television and films, and the tendency to assume that the declining moral standards of our society can be blamed on the media. Because many movies, rock groups and television programs seem to "promote" (as opposed to "express") worldly, materialistic values, the authors suggest that there is something *inherently* worldly and materialistic about movies, rock music and television. They don't suggest this idea clearly and consistently, but their arguments are presented in such a way as to make this conclusion inescapable — if you accept their arguments.

I'm not sure that the media products described are quite as evil as the authors say they are. For example, the media are blamed for their contribution to "the general crisis of authority in Western societies." I happen to think that a heavy dose of cynicism about the motives of the "authorities" is a healthy thing.

Media and moral standards

Nor am I convinced by their analysis of the relationship between the media and our "declining moral standards." One of the most fundamental mysteries about our culture is the question of whether popular taste has really declined, or whether we are merely seeing, for the first time, a genuinely democratic *popular* culture.

Has it occurred to the authors that when massive numbers of unsophisticated consumers are mobilized to choose their own entertainment — as they now are, for the first time in history — they tend to prefer the trashy, the derivative and the obvious over the refined, the origina' and the subtle? The vast majority of consumers have neither the time nor inclination to invest the effort required to refine and develop strong aesthetic values. The vast majority of people *never* have and never will; there has never been a generation that was numerically dominated by lovers of Van Gogh, Beethoven or Tolstoy, or even Ingmar Bergman or Bob Dylan.

My own parents didn't like rock music or movies, but they did like "The Beverly Hillbillies" and Championship Wrestling. Were they among the "authorities" that experienced a crisis of some kind because I began to listen to the Beatles and Leonard Cohen, and went to see "The Graduate" when I was 14?

Another weakness in this collection is the skimpy discussion of the content or meaning of any specific works of art. The panel obviously included fans of Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Bruce Springsteen and the Beatles, but their real level of intimacy with their subject is questionable: the Beatles' "When I'm 64" does *not* poke fun at old age; "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" was *not* inspired by LSD (it was inspired by a poster for a music hall in Liverpool); Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man" does *not* advocate political involvement — it was written well after Dylan had turned his back on the protest movement; and the Eagle's "Hotel California" does *not* celebrate escapism — it sharply, caustically criticizes self-centred materialism.

The numerous factual errors are not insignificant slips; they are indications of only a passing familiarity with the material. Given the weight of the accusations levelled, I don't think it is altogether excusable to be this misinformed about so many specific details.

It is very possible that young people who *live and breathe* popular culture are not experiencing what these analysts think they are experiencing. And when they absurdly conclude that rock music is "more sensation than it is cognitive expression," I begin to wonder if I have momentarily stepped out of a time machine into the 1950s, when church leaders described rock'n'roll as cacaphony and "jungle music." Think about it. Is Beethoven's Ninth Symphony "sensation" or "cognitive expression?" How about "London Calling" by the Clash, or "Satisfaction" by the Stones? How do you know?

These analysts, after all this study, remain distant outsiders, unaware of the subtle nuances and implications of popular art. They try to impose a logical, rationalistic framework onto works of art that are decidedly physical, emotional and intuitive. If rationality is all that means anything in life, so be it, but this is not how the consumers of modern culture experience it, and the writers don't provide any evidence that suggests that this is the only way music and film *should* be experienced.

Lip service

The authors touch upon one suggestion which is not fully developed, but which I think is immensely important and should grab the attention of every Christian educator in every Christian school in North America: there ought to be a *media curriculum,* which parallels the language curriculums in all of our schools. If we want to raise our children's standards we need to teach them the grammar and the syntax of the media in a systematic way. Think of it: in the same time span that our children go from a "Dick and Jane" reading level to Shakespeare and Margaret Laurence, their level of taste in television goes from "America's Funniest Home Videos" to "America's Funniest Home Videos," which they probably watch with their parents. And we blame the media!

The idea of developing a media curriculum has been paid lip-service for years and the net result is a few token "Mass Media" courses in high school, usually scheduled opposite French. It has been my experience that most of our Christian school teachers are almost as ill-informed about the media as their students are. It is in the best tradition of Reformed thought to understand and redeem culture, not to hide from it. Is this tradition dying, to be replaced by a fundamentalist rejection of "worldly" pursuits?

Dancing in the Dark is a sometimes courageous, mildly helpful attempt to make a truly informed assessment of the media from a Christian perspective. Its main flaw is that the authors never succeed in overcoming their aesthetic and intellectual prejudices, and consequently waste too much time trying to prove that rock music and music video and television and film are all really quite as bad as Mom and Dad told us they were 30 years ago.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Work (V)

"... Establish the work of our hands" (Psalm 90:17).

The central section of Moses' thought in Psalm 90 has this thought to it: *Establish the work of our hands, Lord, because so much that we do is trite and meaningless!*

Unflattering portrait

Samuel Butler once said: "Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself." But what would you see if you stood with God and looked at the portrait of your life?

Listen to what Moses says: We see your anger with our sinful preoccupations! We blush when looking with you over the silly things that consume our work days! We're terrified by the indignation you show when you assess how little we've done of meaning and purpose!

"Establish the work of our hands, Lord!" we cry. "Teach us to do what is godly! Give us wisdom to choose our vocations well, and insight to add to the human condition rather than just taking away from it!"

A worthy calling

Francis Bacon once asked, "How can I take an interest in my work when I don't like it?" And sometimes we find ourselves there with him: What am I doing? Why am I doing it? How did I get myself into this?

Give us wisdom when we're young, Moses prays, to choose our careers for better reasons than dollar signs! Teach us to number our days aright, he implores, so that we won't major in minors or lose our souls in the mad frenzy of trying to gain the world!

In his novel *Point Counter Point,* Aldous Huxley challenges us to think about our work. "Work," he says, "gives them the comfortable illusion of existing, even of being important. If they stopped working, they'd realize they simply weren't there at all, most of them. Just holes in the air, that's all."

Most of our lives we hide ourselves in our work to keep from considering that possibility. But if we run up against those words one day and find out just how true they are, we're left on the brink of emotional bankruptcy. "Oh God!" we cry out, "give us work that means something! Keep us from wasting our time on trite busywork! Forgive us for majoring in minors when there's so much that needs to be done, that begs to be done, that ought to be done!"

A worthy epitaph

"Establish the work of our hands, Lord, because we *do* want to do something of meaning and importance during the years of our existence!"

When a woman named Winifred Holtby died, she had this prayer inscribed on her gravestone:

God give me work while I may live
and life till my work is done.

And when we seek God for wisdom, when we beg God for insight, when we choose our work with an eye to his will, that prayer is fulfilled in our lives.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.